

2016-8

## The Creation of Meaning and Identity in the Dublin Jazz Scene, Past and Present.

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# THE CREATION OF MEANING AND IDENTITY IN THE DUBLIN JAZZ SCENE, PAST AND PRESENT

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August 2016

## **Abstract**

The narrative of jazz performance in Ireland is unique due to the political changes that coincided with the arrival of jazz and the influence these changes had on the nation. Over the last one hundred years, jazz performance in Dublin has represented contrasting values for different people. What has remained consistent is the notion of participation within a network of musicians, audience members, promoters and institutions that make up a scene. To participate in a scene is to be actively involved in contestation and negotiation as individuals and groups seek to create meaning and identity through jazz performance.

In this thesis I examine both the development of the Dublin jazz scene and how meaning and identity is created through participation in it. It addresses an absence of scholarly work on jazz in Ireland beyond the anti-jazz movement of the 1920s, revealing an active community of jazz participants from the 1940s through to present times. It also addresses an imbalance of many jazz studies that focus only on ‘top-level’ performers, disregarding the complex interrelationships between not only musicians of all levels, but of the experience of audience members, journalists, promoters and others who participate in the performance of jazz.

This dissertation first conducts an historical overview of the Dublin jazz scene using primarily archival research. It then uses ethnographic methods to investigate and analyse the scene through its musicians, venues, educational institutions, audiences, promotional bodies and record labels. It argues that the day-to-day activities of jazz musicians, including those outside what has been traditionally viewed as ‘jazz’, should be taken into account when attempting to fully understand jazz performance. This dissertation highlights the long history of jazz performance in Dublin and gives voice to the participants within the scene and places those voices within the context of wider issues in jazz studies.

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of PhD is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate study by research of the Dublin Institute of Technology and has not been submitted in whole or in part for any other award in any other third level institution.

The work reported on in this thesis conforms to the principles and requirements of the DIT's guidelines for ethics in research.

DIT has permission to keep, lend or copy this thesis in whole or in part, on condition that any such use of the material of the thesis be duly acknowledged.

**Signature:**

*(Candidate)*

**Date:**



## Acknowledgements

Many people contributed to this dissertation. I would firstly like to thank the Dublin Institute of Technology, for the financial support provided by the Fiosraigh, Dean of Graduate's Award. All the staff at both the Graduate Office and the Conservatory of Music and Drama have always been happy to help.

I thank my supervisor Maria McHale for her invaluable advice and support. Maria was patient, generous and helpful throughout the writing of this thesis and I greatly appreciate her huge contribution to my work.

My advisory supervisor Jaime Jones was highly influential in the overall direction of this thesis. Her invitation to attend her ethnomusicology seminars gave me a context where I felt music and scholarship spoke to one another in a way I had not felt before. Our subsequent meetings provided new insights and directions and I feel privileged to have had Jaime for support and advice.

John Feeley was my supervisor for the early part of my PhD studies and provided wonderful support as I embarked on my journey. I thank him for his encouragement and enthusiasm.

There were countless participants in the Dublin jazz scene who took the time to speak to me, either formally or informally. Others helped my research through their friendships and music. While I cannot name them all, the list includes:

Nathan Bakkum, Philip Bedford, Roland Bent, Cian Boylan, Sean Brophy, Cote Calmet, Emilie Conway, Julien Colarossi, Jim Doherty, Barry Donahue, Brendan Doyle, Phil Collins, Myles Drennan, Peter Erdei, Grainne Farren, Scott Flanigan, Dave Fleming, Gerry Godley, Patrick Groenland, Ronan Guilfoyle, Linley Hamilton, Donald Helme, Matthew Jacobson, Kenneth Killeen, Shane Latimer, Tony McDonald, Edel Meade, Nigel Mooney, John Moriarty, Carole Nelson, Paul O'Donnell, Darragh O'Kelly, David O'Rourke, Brian Palm, Brian Priestley, Dominic Reilly, Dylan Rynhart, Guy Rickarby, Karl Rooney, Suzanne Savage, Allen Smith, Francesco Turrisi, Paul Wade, Maria Walsh, Phil Ware, Katherine Wyers and Yoon So-Young.

While preparing this dissertation for printing, the great Louis Stewart passed away, having been ill for many months. I would like to acknowledge his contribution to jazz in Ireland and his kindness to me personally.

Colin Harper spared me hours of painstaking work by proofreading my thesis and offering valuable insights and ideas. He went well beyond a proofreader's remit and I thank him for that.

My tutors and colleagues at GradCam, Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media were invaluable in developing my approach to a research project within the arts. In particular Martin McCabe, Lisa Godson, Noel Fitzpatrick, Mick Wilson, Pat Daley, Brian Ó hUiginn, Nollaig Ó Fiongháile, Seán McErlaine, Martin Tourish and Drazen Derrick.

I would like to acknowledge a particular debt to Cormac Kenevey, Johnny Taylor, Dominic Mullan. Johnny and Dominic gave freely of their time and talent as part of my trio and countless other musical collaborations. Cormac has always (well, not always) been a source of support, willing to help out and listen to my ramblings. Now we know.

A very large part of who I am (the good parts) are due to my family, my parents Vincent and Judith Evans and my brother Brendan Evans. Thank you for everything you have given me. My late grandparents Norm and Lena Candy were a large part of my formative years, as were my extended family, including my Uncle Jim Candy who very generously gave me financial support during my studies. My extended Irish family have always treated me as one of their own. I thank them all for all the love they have given me.

Finally, my wife Ann Lorraine Mack has always given me her unconditional support and I have appreciated that over the duration of my studies. I am very lucky to have someone who cares for me and loves me as she does and I would like to express my gratitude and love to her.

## **Abbreviations List**

BAJP: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Jazz Performance

DIT: Dublin Institute of Technology

GAA: Gaelic Athletic Association

HERA: Humanities in the European Research Area

HETAC: Higher Education and Training Awards Council

IMC: Improvised Music Company

JPI: Joint Programming Initiatives.

KC: King's Council

LGSM: Licentiate of the Guildhall School of Music

NCEA: National Council for Educational Awards

Newpark: Newpark Music Centre

PA: Public Announcement (System)

PMTC: Professional Musician Training Course

QQI: Quality and Qualifications Ireland

RTÉ: Raidió Teilifís Éireann

TD: Teachta Dála. Deputy to the Dáil. A member of Dáil Éireann, the lower house of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament).

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## Introduction

I do not approach the Dublin jazz scene as a passive, unbiased observer. Jazz scenes have been central to my life since I started playing in Perth, Western Australia, where I lived between 1986 and 1997, from the age of twelve to twenty-three. Jazz has been an ever-present part of my daily life for over twenty years. Since beginning my PhD research, my own sense of how I relate to the various elements within my own scene has changed irrevocably. I have taken a step back and viewed the scene from a different angle, from what I now know is a reflexive position. My self-awareness has been changed by my investigations of the issues of power, identity, race, history, mythology, ritual, and ethics that resonate through academic writings on, and daily participation with, jazz and jazz scenes.

My responses to the question ‘What do you do?’ have fluctuated for many years. I would vary my answers between ‘a musician’, ‘a jazz musician’, ‘a bassist’, or ‘I play music’, depending on who was asking the question. I now see such statements, and the conversations that followed them, as a public statement of identity, a way in which I sought to negotiate a complex net of societal and cultural norms and expectations. My expression of my identity or ‘what I do’ could elicit many responses, from respect to mockery.

To place my position within some context, I have been an active participant in the Dublin jazz scene since moving to Dublin in 2007. However, my participation began much earlier, as I travelled to Dublin for gigs while working in the considerably smaller scene of Galway, where I organised jazz gigs, a jazz club, and a jazz festival. Although I occasionally played in Dublin during my early years in Galway, I did not consider that I was ‘part of the scene’. Eventually, through inviting musicians from Dublin to play in Galway, I was invited back to Dublin to play with them. As the financial situation in Galway and, indeed, nationally and globally deteriorated, I increasingly made the then three-and-a-half-hour journey between my home in Galway and Dublin to play gigs, often staying with friends and extended family in Dublin, eventually making the decision with my wife to relocate to Dublin. A look back through my gig diary at this time brings back memories of when I was trying to ‘break into the scene’, a situation all musicians face when they move to a new town, city, or country, or when they attempt to move their music making from their practice room to the outside world.

After playing in the Dublin jazz scene for a few years, a one-year Master's in Jazz Performance course was started at the Dublin Institute of Technology, Conservatory of Music and Drama. It was the first year the course had been offered and was largely self-directed. It was 2009, and I was turning 35. Although I had been aware of the possible negative financial ramifications of being a jazz musician since I began working, it was becoming increasingly clear to me that to keep slowly edging my way up the bass player 'career ladder' (a construct that does not reflect how bass players are booked for gigs in reality) was perhaps not going to provide much of a change in my circumstances. The opportunity to take a Master's course with fees paid and a small stipend from Dublin City Council was attractive.<sup>1</sup> At this stage, I had not given a great deal of thought to the long-term consequences of completing the course. I thought a year dedicated to my instrument and music would be extremely beneficial to me as a player, and reasoned that, although I had no immediate plans to continue in education as student or teacher, a qualification would be a welcome bonus. Seven jazz musicians completed the course in its first year; all except one were peers of mine active on the Dublin jazz scene.

For the duration of my Master's thesis, on the developments of the 'broken feel' from Scott LaFaro to present, I was unaware of where my writing sat in the academic landscape. Was I writing a musicology thesis? Was it jazz studies? Although we were given some modules in academic writing, it was primarily a performance-based course and it was the performance aspect that took most of our attention. I continued to work (play music) throughout my studies (it would have been almost unthinkable not to), and upon completion of my Master's degree I applied for, and was awarded, the DIT's Fiosraigh, Dean of Graduate's Award at the Conservatory of Music and Drama. This award allowed me to pursue PhD studies with fees paid and a monthly stipend.

I would estimate that every week for the last twenty years of my life I have played somewhere around an average of three to five gigs a week. I had an approximately two-year hiatus when I left Australia to tour with a youth big band and continued backpacking through the UK and Europe, sometimes with my instrument, sometimes without, eventually ending up in Ireland, with my instrument and with, quite literally, no money with which to leave. Hiatus aside, this prolonged period of performance has

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<sup>1</sup> This is a grant available to most mature-age students, living away from home, who have not completed a Master's course before. With subsequent budget changes, this assistance has become increasingly difficult to get.

obviously affected my self-awareness; playing jazz is ‘what I do’. In a very real and personal way, I feel the music I play belongs to me and is part of ‘who I am’. I have invested large amounts of time and money to promote jazz and to help educate young musicians. The reasons for this were not always altruistic. For example, stimulating an interest in jazz in Galway, where a tradition of jazz was not strong, meant, advantageously, creating more work for me. Stimulating an interest in schools, through assisting in the establishment of jazz ensembles by young people, meant a future audience too. At the same time, I felt like I gave people of all ages the benefits of anything I had learnt throughout my career, and got to convey a genuine love of jazz, of music in general, and of group performance.

My time in Ireland has also brought me into contact with another type of musician. From an early stage, I started to work with traditional Irish musicians, from both meeting them in pubs and carefully negotiating the politics of bringing a double bass into a traditional Irish session. This developed into touring Europe and America with Alan Kelly, the traditional Irish piano accordionist, and then more touring with singer Seán Keane. These experiences introduced me to musicians who could claim to be playing ‘their own’ music. Traditional Irish music ‘belonged’ to them in a different way than I felt jazz ‘belonged’ to me. Having Irish ancestry, I too could make a claim to some sort of ownership to Irish music through my ‘Irish roots’. There was a precedent for this: Australian guitarist Steve Cooney arrived in Ireland sometime around 1980 or 1981 and is now considered a master innovator. Cooney, according to Paul O’Connor, had been inspired to investigate his own roots by Aboriginal elders from his Northern Territory homeland.<sup>2</sup>

Although I learnt a lot about Irish music and Ireland through association with these artists, my instrument and original love for jazz kept me moving toward jazz performance whenever possible, and, since leaving the west of Ireland, my association with traditional Irish music has been limited. I include this biographical section in order to give context to my study of the Dublin jazz scene. It is important to note that the Dublin jazz scene, although it is the scene in which I am involved, is not the scene of my formative years. When Dublin-born musicians gather and discuss their own formative years—the musicians who have died, historic events in the scene—I cannot

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2 O’Connor, Paul: ‘Just Cooney’, *The Journal of Music*, (2012) <<http://journalofmusic.com/focus/just-cooney>> [Accessed 2 December 2013].

participate in the same way as I can in a discussion about the Perth jazz scene of the mid- to late 90s. Consequently, I am both an insider on the Dublin jazz scene and an outsider. This is not an entirely unusual position to be in as a researcher or as a musician, and I do not point it out as a negative factor, merely to be clear as to my own pathway through and position in the Dublin jazz scene.

As with many PhD projects, this study evolved over time. I desired to locate my study within the context of research into jazz performance that both inspired and addressed issues I felt were important to me as an emerging academic and as an active musician. As such, my attention turned from understanding and developing new methods of interaction within a jazz trio, to understanding jazz performance within the context of its social and cultural settings, that is, to understand jazz performance as experienced by its practitioners. In this context, by practitioners, I refer to anyone who participates within the scene, that is, takes part in activities that bring them into contact with other participants in a way that meaning and identity is created. I ask the question ‘How is meaning and identity constructed in the Dublin jazz scene?’. I am interested in why participation in jazz music is important to people in the Dublin jazz scene and how they express the importance of the music through their words and actions.

I approached this by surveying the literature that pertains to the research question. Throughout Chapter 1, I reveal how particular themes and issues have been dealt with in jazz studies literature, in particular where such topics coincide with my own research. This in turn informed my methodology which again is covered in Chapter 1. Although much of the literature which informed my own work is geared towards an ethnographic investigation, it was clear that in terms of the Dublin jazz scene, past or present, literature was scarce to say the least. For this reason, Chapter 2 consists of an historical overview of jazz in Ireland that has not heretofore been undertaken. This was necessary to place the contemporary scene and the issues that occur within it, in context. This chapter begins with the history and reception of black music and musicians in Ireland and moves through to the development of the Improvised Music Company and the jazz course in Newpark Music Centre in the 1980s. With these developments, the contemporary scene could be said to have begun to develop and so I end my historical overview in the 1980s.

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework that is implicit throughout the rest of the study. Beginning with the construction of identity, from a personal construction,

through to a sense of identity that brings a sense of connection with the immediate environment and beyond, this chapter deals with how identity is central to participation in jazz. I examine how individuals tread pathways in their navigation of scenes, as they engage with the mythology of jazz, experienced in the day-to-day but understood as extending to an Irish scene, a European scene and a global scene.

In Chapter 4 I consider institutions within jazz scenes including venues, educational centres, promotional agencies, collectives and musician-led initiatives. Here, I examine the role that knowledge and power play in the relationships between participants and institutions, including the role institutions play in allowing, shaping and constraining the construction of identity and meaning within the scene, and corresponding musical representations of these constructions.

Chapter 5 draws together the issues and concepts raised in previous chapters and applies them in a case study of how one major Irish jazz institution, the Improvised Music Company, functions within the Dublin jazz scene, and the deeper philosophical issues this raises. Inherent in this is an examination of how the IMC is represented in the media and its interactions with both jazz scene participants and the wider public.

Finally, Chapter 6 brings the thesis to an end, summarising the study, drawing conclusions regarding its findings and suggesting further action and research that should be undertaken.

# Chapter 1: Literature Review and Methodology

## 1.1 Overview of Approaches to Jazz Studies

In 1988, jazz researcher and author Lewis Porter's much-cited 'Some Problems in Jazz Research' was published in the *Black Music Research Journal*, shortly before, as Ken Prouty points out, the emergence of what came to be called 'new jazz studies'.<sup>1</sup> In it, he applauds the recent appearance of the 'professional jazz scholar', and calls on the field to pursue academic excellence.<sup>2</sup> The following years have seen this call largely heeded, and the last twenty-five years have seen an ever-increasing multi-disciplinary approach to jazz studies. Scholars' efforts at studying, analysing, and understanding jazz performance have included historical, musicological, ethnomusicological, cognitive, interactionist, micro-sociological, and constructionist approaches.<sup>3</sup> The list goes on. *Jazz Among the Discourses* (1995) states that it looks through the lenses of 'comparative literature, African American studies, history and philosophy' and 'brings together scholars from an array of disciplines'.<sup>4</sup> *Uptown Conversation* (2004) draws on 'African American studies, cultural studies, literary studies, the new musicology, and insights of poststructuralism.'<sup>5</sup>

The inherently multidisciplinary approach of the new jazz studies reflects elements of 'new musicology' and the wider changes in postgraduate education as a whole. The new jazz studies draw substantially from ethnomusicology, itself a multidisciplinary field,

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1 Porter, Lewis: 'Some Problems in Jazz Research', *Black Music Research Journal*, (1988), 8. As cited in Prouty, Ken: *Knowing Jazz: Community, Pedagogy, and Canon in the Information Age*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 78.

2 Porter, 204.

3 Ethnomusicological examples include: Berliner, Paul F.: *Thinking in Jazz*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Jackson, Travis A.: *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene*, (Chicago: University of California Press, 2012); Monson, Ingrid: *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Tsioulakis, Ioannis: 'Jazz in Athens: Frustrated Cosmopolitans in a Music Subculture', *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 20, (2011); Bakkum, Nathan: 'Don't push, don't pull: Jazz rhythm section interaction and musical change', Ph.D. diss., (Illinois: University of Chicago, 2009).

For cognitive viewpoints see Fidlon, James: 'Cognitive dimensions of instrumental jazz improvisation', Ph.D. Diss., (Austin: University of Texas, 2011).

A micro-sociological view has been taken by Reinholdsson, Peter: *Making Music Together: An Interactionist Perspective on Small-Group Performance in Jazz*, (Uppsala: Paul Astroms, 1998).

A constructionist view can be seen in Sawyer, Robert Keith: *Group Creativity: Music, Theater, Collaboration*, (London: Routledge, 2003).

4 Gabbard, Krin, ed., *Jazz Among the Discourses*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), back cover.

5 *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies*, eds. Robert G. O'Meally, Brent Hayes Edwards and Farah Jasmine Griffin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 6.

utilising both anthropological and sociological methods. Even given these many different ways of approaching jazz studies, more than one author has held the view that, beyond historical reviews, research is relatively scant when compared to Western art music.<sup>6</sup>

## 1.2 Early Jazz Studies

The study of jazz has reached the point where scholars can now agree that it has gained acceptance within the academy. The most influential efforts of the last fifty years include Gunther Schuller's *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (1968). The endorsements on the back cover of the 1986 edition point to its status as an influential work in the field:

‘The definitive work about the music.’ (*Chicago Sun-Times*)

‘A milestone in technical ethnomusicology, offering an abundance of musical illustrations.’ (Leonard Feather)

‘A superb job, in its thorough scholarship, its critical perception, and its love and respect for its subject. All future commentary on jazz—indeed on American music—should be indebted to Schuller’s work.’ (Martin Williams, author of *The Jazz Tradition*).<sup>7</sup>

The authority of *Early Jazz* and other studies from the same time has been questioned in subsequent studies. As pointed out by Lewis Porter, the majority of writings on jazz up to that time had been undertaken by people without academic affiliation.<sup>8</sup> Ethnomusicologist Ingrid Monson describes in 1997 that the earlier writing that did come from within the academy (at least up until the reflexive turn of the 1980s) found itself firmly entrenched in traditional musicological assumptions, such as the concept of absolute music, ‘one that views analytical frameworks as neutral and objective and structural values as timeless and universal’.<sup>9</sup> This situation contributed to the perceived divide between the work of academics and ‘the music itself’.

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6 Reinholdsson, 24. Fidlón, 8; Dybo, Tor: ‘Jazz as ethnomusicological research field’, STM-online, 11, (2008), 3 <[http://musikforskning.se/stmonline/vol\\_11/dybo/index.php?menu=3](http://musikforskning.se/stmonline/vol_11/dybo/index.php?menu=3)> [Accessed 22 May 2011].

7 Schuller, Gunther: *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), back cover.

8 Porter, 195.

9 Monson, 4.



The traditional scholarly view of the music was one of a historical product, with an emphasis on the score, the ‘piece’ or the recording, and this view was also reflected in jazz studies. In scholarly works looking at jazz, the music was primarily recordings or transcriptions of recordings, which were to be transcribed, analysed, and understood.<sup>10</sup> Bruno Nettl states that musicologists ‘[a]ffected by the research traditions of visual art and literature [...] have concentrated on the finished work, analysed the interrelationships of its components, and looked at its history, but rarely have they been concerned with the varying orders of creativity that may have led to the final product’.<sup>11</sup>

Previous scholars have noted the problematic use of the Western art music academic model for the study of jazz. Monson uses the chapter titles in Schuller’s book as an example of the dominant narrative of jazz history.<sup>12</sup> The chapter titles include ‘The Origins’, ‘The Beginnings’, ‘The First Great Soloist’, ‘The First Great Composer’.<sup>13</sup> Jazz begins its humble beginnings as a folk music and proceeds from simple to complex, gaining in the process its status as art music.<sup>14</sup> Monson argues that these dominant themes and the aesthetic criteria used in *Early Jazz* borrow ‘from ideas of German romanticism and modernism about absolute and autonomous music and the artist as genius’.<sup>15</sup> She continues by saying that such aesthetic criteria are put forward as ‘timeless’, but are in fact culturally specific, and fail to regard aesthetic criteria of importance to the creators of the music.<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, Nathan Bakkum reports on the use of an evolutionary model when describing the ‘advance’ of jazz. Jazz begins and ‘proudly displays a full range of pre-slavery tribal retentions in its forms, textures, and rhythms’.<sup>17</sup> Jazz is discovered by Europeans and begins its journey to complexity and modernisation. As Bakkum puts it, jazz gives up its folk roots and becomes art. Bakkum repeats the observation that this model borrows from European models of Western art music (in particular the ‘Great Composer’

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10 Jackson, Travis A., 5.

11 Nettl, Bruno, & Melinda Russell: *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*, (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 1.

12 Monson, 134.

13 Schuller, as cited in Monson, 133.

14 This can be seen as an example of Scott DeVeaux’s much cited argument concerning the constructed nature of the jazz narrative. See: DeVeaux, Scott: ‘Constructing the jazz tradition: Jazz historiography’, *Black American Literature Forum*, 25, (1991).

15 Monson, 134.

16 *Ibid.* David Ake suggests that the emphasis on the soloist may even have given rise to the dominant ‘great men’ jazz narrative. See: Ake, David Andrew: *Jazz Matters: Sound, Place, and Time Since Bebop*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 22.

17 Bakkum, 12.



model), and was an important part of the legitimisation of jazz as art, for reasons of both employment and also for inclusion of jazz into the worlds of education and funding.<sup>18</sup> The debates concerning the best way to study jazz continue to evolve. Ajay Heble argued in 2000 that the best writing on jazz:

has to involve a rather tricky balancing act, a complex set of negotiations between on the one hand the teachings of critical theory—especially its dismantling of socially produced assumptions about meaning, identity, and knowledge—and, on the other, a recognition of the value and importance of documenting insider perspectives.<sup>19</sup>

Heble both applauds and problematizes the efforts of scholars such as Monson, Berliner, and Merod for their ‘arguments for the ethical obligation to take seriously insider perspectives in jazz, to recognize that the critical frameworks we impose upon jazz may be at variance with the musics, lives, and experiences we seek to describe and represent’.<sup>20</sup> Although contemporary scholars have begun to value the perspectives on insiders, jazz studies are still dominated by the ‘great men’ of jazz. Just as contemporary society functions at many levels, and the study of society has moved beyond the study of those in positions of power, so jazz scenes are populated primarily by those who do not make the level of ‘great men’. Peter Hollerbach’s article in the journal *Popular Music* (2004) is one of the scholarly papers that recognise that the ‘great men’ narratives:

[...] are flawed by their reductionism; they ignore—and therefore dismiss—the many musicians who labour in relative obscurity on jazz scenes worldwide and thus maintain the music’s viability through a multidimensional act of commitment no less intense than that of those documented, “real” jazz musicians of jazz historiography.<sup>21</sup>

This observation is of particular interest to my own study. Although even the existence of an Irish jazz scene is contested, it is indisputable that there are ‘many musicians who labour in relative obscurity’. The relationship of these musicians to the dominant jazz narrative can demonstrate how participants use jazz as a way of negotiating their way through contested spaces in an attempt to find meaning and identity for themselves.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Heble, Ajay: *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, Dissonance, and Critical Practice*, (New York: Routledge, 2000), 91.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 90., See also: Merod, Jim: ‘Jazz as a cultural archive’, *Boundary 2*, 22, (1995).

<sup>21</sup> Hollerbach, Peter: ‘(Re)voicing tradition: improvising aesthetics and identity on local jazz scenes’, *Popular Music*, 23, (2004), 156.

Krin Gabbard's introduction to *Jazz Among the Discourses* (1995) recognises the concept of the creation of the jazz canon as a feature of the movement of jazz studies toward 'professionalization and autonomy'.<sup>22</sup> Gabbard's foreword states that his collection of writings argue that jazz 'has entered the mainstreams of the American academy', and that jazz studies are 'now being transformed and invigorated by new approaches'.

### 1.3 Jazz Studies and European Theoretical Frameworks

In his paper in *Popular Music*, 'Hear Me Talkin' to Ya: Problems of Jazz Discourse' (1993), Bruce Johnson suggests that the attempt to 'legitimise' jazz through the use of a European theoretical framework is comparable to 'driving a square peg into a round hole'.<sup>23</sup> Drawing on French economist, author, and senior civil servant Jacques Attali's book *Noise*, Johnson argues that such discourse has the effect of changing the music in order that it fits more easily into a political economy.<sup>24</sup> The nature of jazz performance is resistant to commodification due to the primacy of 'the performance' in the aesthetic of the typical performer.<sup>25</sup> This resistance is evident in the impossibility involved in 'writing' a jazz performance or recording a performance in its entirety (inclusive of all the elements of a socially and spatially situated event). The primacy of the performance is at odds with the primary systems of analysis in academia, because they are 'most commonly imported from the realm of the fully scripted, completed art work, canonised in a print-dominated milieu'.<sup>26</sup>

For Johnson, a mind/body hierarchy that has roots in a European cultural construction of the mind as the site of artistic creation, in contrast to the embodied notion of jazz/black music performance, makes 'music that is "stored" in a score' more amenable to commodification, adaptable to be conceived of as 'music as object' rather than 'music as process'.<sup>27</sup> Johnson suggests other modes of discourse as being more compatible with jazz performance than modernist critical discourse, which he argues is

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22 Gabbard.

23 Johnson, Bruce: 'Hear Me Talkin' to Ya: Problems of Jazz Discourse', *Popular Music*, 12, (1993), 1.

24 Attali, Jacques: *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).

25 Tony Whyton has problematized this primacy—see Whyton, Tony: *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Ch. 2.

26 Johnson, 2-3.

27 *Ibid.*, 3.

‘largely the instrument of a political project which requires the reduction of the art process to a commodity’.<sup>28</sup>

#### 1.4 Jazz Studies and Ethnomusicology

By highlighting the importance of the voices of performers within the jazz community, Paul Berliner’s *Thinking in Jazz* (1994) encompasses not only a theoretical perspective but also explains significant cultural and sociological aspects of jazz performance and the lives of jazz performers.<sup>29</sup> An epic work built upon interviews with over sixty jazz musicians, it is the most encompassing examination of the processes involved in the production of jazz to date. Through his investigation of how musicians are introduced to jazz, learn to play their instruments, think during improvisation and composition, interact within an ensemble, interact with an audience and within a jazz venue, and view jazz as a way of life, Berliner gives voice to professional musicians in a way that was previously dominated by an anecdotal style of presentation. Although anecdotes are not absent from *Thinking in Jazz*, the book attempts to do away with the need to mystify, deify or romanticise the musicians, instead drawing specific performance issues from the interviews to show the multi-faceted, socially and culturally constructed nature of the processes involved in playing jazz.<sup>30</sup>

The importance of the performer’s voice to jazz studies is further emphasised in Ingrid Monson’s *Saying Something* (1997), in which she investigates the relationship between the rhythm section and the soloist in jazz performance. She identifies the relationship as one that has no parallels in the Western art music tradition and, as such, is an element that has escaped serious study. Monson identifies interaction amongst musicians at several analytical levels:

1. The creation of music through the improvisational interaction of sounds
2. The interactive shaping of social networks and communities that accompany musical participation
3. The development of culturally variable meanings and ideologies that inform the interpretation of jazz in American society.<sup>31</sup>

Monson develops an ethnomusicological perspective of jazz improvisation centred on interaction in this multiple sense. The book title concerns itself with the moments when

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>29</sup> Berliner.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Monson, 2.

a performer connects with a discerning audience. Referring to the live jazz experience, she notes that in order for ‘something to be said’ the audience must be able to hear within the context of the ‘richly textured aural legacy of jazz and African American music’ and that a moment of community can be established through the ‘simultaneous interaction of musical sounds, people and their musical and cultural histories’.<sup>32</sup>

Like Berliner, Monson partakes in close readings of performances and compositions. She makes a call for ‘a more cultural music theory and a more musical cultural theory’, noting that ‘discussions of musical structures and cultural issues in musical scholarship have generally proceeded along parallel—decidedly nonintersecting—lines.’ Monson does this by approaching close readings of musical works with a view to the ‘constant intersection of sound, structure and social meaning’, analysing and evaluating jazz on its own terms rather than looking for analogues in the Western art music tradition.<sup>33</sup> She pays particular attention to the interaction within the rhythm section, acknowledging the problems of race and culture.<sup>34</sup>

### **1.5 Ethnomusicology and Postmodernism**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Ingrid Monson was researching her PhD dissertation, the traditional practice of ethnomusicology did not, in her view, fit into an ‘urban, heterogeneous jazz scene crosscut by media, multiple ethnicities, and the recording industry’.<sup>35</sup> Since that time, she notes that the study of ‘popular’ music no longer fits into any one disciplinary boundary. Monson states that music has been found to be a relevant topic of study for anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, literary theorists, mass communications theorists, musicologists, cinema scholars, sociologists, and cultural historians, with music of the African diaspora being disproportionately represented.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, cognitive theorists, social interactionalists, and many more could be added to this list.

In a chapter on ethnomusicology and postmodernism, Monson laments the depreciation of the vernacular voice and the phenomenal world in debates concerning postmodernism and music. The dominant voices of Foucault and Derrida have placed discourse at the centre of postmodernist thought. Monson argues that Foucault ‘situated

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

himself against a book-centered, work-centered concept of history that treated texts and their authors as transparently obvious'.<sup>37</sup> Although the concept of Foucault's discourse has been widely applied to music, Monson posits that pressing music into this framework has inherent problems, primarily the metaphorical prioritisation of writing over speech, or, as it can be applied to music, the prioritisation of the non-phenomenological aspects of music—those which can be easily written down, discussed, fixed on paper—over those elements of music that are of equal importance but are much more problematic to capture on paper, including the sonic sound, non-notable timbral and dynamic inflections, and the lived experience of music. She argues against the dichotomy of a 'multifaceted social construction of human beings and their cultural worlds' and 'ideas about human agency or the phenomenology of sound'.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.6 Mythology

Research on jazz, whether within or without the academy, is inseparable from the mythology that feeds our understanding of the music and its production. In *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition* (2010), Tony Whyton outlines the role that myth plays in the reception of jazz through the historical mediation of jazz icons. Whyton suggests that icons work in jazz through a number of ways: as visual image, as symbol, as uncritical object of devotion, as deity, and as sign. Jazz icons 'have come to stand for a whole host of values beyond their visual representation', they serve as 'a symbol function in that they are continually invested with meaning and serve both to support and perpetuate jazz mythologies'. Specifically, he argues that jazz icons serve to support the authority of the jazz canon, a sense of homogenous tradition and the romantic jazz life.<sup>39</sup> In addition, the mediation of jazz is of primary importance, jazz icons are presented as an unmediated experience; however, without the mediating artefacts of, for example, sound recordings, photography, anecdotes, and so on, icons would cease to be iconic. In order for jazz to exist, mediation must occur, and therefore it is 'questionable to separate heroic acts (art) from forms of public expression (media)'.<sup>40</sup>

Regarding icon as sign, jazz icons have the potential to

become part of what Roland Barthes discussed as a second-order sign system, their natural, uncomplicated, unquestioned place in history

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

<sup>39</sup> Whyton, 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

masking a series of mythologies. Essentially as connotative signs, jazz icons serve the dominant values of today's mainstream; they are part of a system of representation that continually invests them with meaning in order to preserve the authority of the canon and homogenous jazz tradition.<sup>41</sup>

Whyton's work can be seen as part of the new jazz studies in that it subjects the recently constructed jazz canon to scrutiny and critical discussion. Through foregrounding the role that the jazz icon has come to play in contemporary understandings of jazz, he interrogates the dominant narratives that surround the music.

### 1.7 Scenes

It seems the first attempt to look beyond the jazz musician and the 'music' as a source of meaning in the production of jazz was Alan Merriam and Raymond Mack's 'The Jazz Community', published in 1960 in *Social Forces*. Taking a sociological perspective, the paper attempts to 'present a factual description of what we shall call the jazz community'.<sup>42</sup> The authors argue that the jazz community is defined by those who share an interest in jazz and 'learn and accept at least some of the norms which are peculiar to the jazz musician', regarding music, fashion, behaviour, language, and the like.<sup>43</sup> They continue that the jazz community in 1960 was characterised by a central theme of isolation (psychological, social, and physical) from society at large, remnants of which can still be felt today. The paper draws a distinction between the musician and the jazz 'public', and concludes that the jazz community is a social group in which the extent to which the public share in the occupational ideology and behaviours of the jazz musician is 'striking' when compared to other occupational groups.<sup>44</sup>

The term community does not refer to a specific geographical location, and, having been written in 1960, there is an unstated assumption that Merriam and Mack were referring to the American jazz community, sharing many characteristics perhaps with jazz scenes around the world, even in the 1960s, but also differing in many important ways. Ken Prouty addresses some of these issues in his book *Knowing Jazz* (2012) which also uses the concept of a jazz community. Prouty shows how the term 'community' has been used extensively in jazz writings but is rarely defined or addressed critically, and, as a result, takes on an ambiguity of meaning. He shows how

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41 *Ibid.*, 11.

42 Merriam, Alan P. and Mack, Ray W.: 'The Jazz Community', *Social Forces*, 38, (1960), 211.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*, 222.

it is used to express a ‘singular consciousness’, without defining who belongs within the community, or to address specific instances of a jazz community intertwined with ‘race, gender or other assumed identities and behaviours’.<sup>45</sup>

Ruth Finnegan’s *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (1989) chooses to look at the different ‘musical worlds’ within a particular geographical space, Milton Keynes, noting that the jazz world was the most fragmented of the musical worlds investigated, and ‘was more a fluid and impermanent series of bands and venues than an integrated and self-conscious musical world’.<sup>46</sup> Finnegan also noted that, although fragmented, there were shared elements in playing jazz that ‘seemed to be a continuing element in their own identity and their perception of others’.<sup>47</sup>

Some writers have chosen to focus on ‘scenes’ rather than communities or worlds. Travis Jackson credits Will Straw for the first ‘sustained meditation on musical scenes in popular music’ in a 1991 article in *Cultural Studies*, while Straw acknowledges a 1988 Barry Shanks paper for pointing to ‘the usefulness of a notion of “scene” in accounting for the relationship between different musical practices unfolding within a given geographical space’.<sup>48</sup> In a 2004 paper, Straw calls Shank’s 1994 book, *Dissonant Identities: The Rock’n’Roll Scene in Austin, Texas* ‘one of the first academic works to address the concept’.<sup>49</sup>

Straw notes in the journal *Public* that although scenes can describe both global phenomena and local urban activity, they act as both agents of change and sources of continuity. Straw points out that scene boundaries are both invisible and elastic, and evoke both intimacy and wider communication. Furthermore, he recognises the ‘role of writing, law and commerce in shaping these phenomena we call scenes’.<sup>50</sup>

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45 Prouty, 15–16.

46 Finnegan, Ruth: *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town*, Reprint (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 88.

47 *Ibid.*, 89.

48 Jackson, 55; Straw, Will: ‘Systems of articulation, logics of change: communities and scenes in popular music’, *Cultural Studies*, 5, (1991), 373; Shank, Barry: ‘Transgressing the boundaries of a rock “n” roll community’, presented at the First Joint Conference of IASPM-Canada and IASPM- USA, (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1988).

49 Straw, Will: ‘Cultural scenes’, *Loisir et Société/Society and Leisure*, (2004), 27; Shank, Barry: *Dissonant Identities: The Rock’n’Roll Scene in Austin, Texas*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994).

50 Straw, Will: ‘Scenes and sensibilities’, *Public*, eds. Janine Marchessault and Will Straw, (2001), 246.

As cited in Straw's 2004 paper, Shank suggests that a scene could be defined as 'an overprotective signifying community'.<sup>51</sup> For Shank, a scene resists deciphering by creating far more semiotic information that can be 'rationally parsed'.<sup>52</sup> He argues that the defining characteristic of scenes is their conducive environment to the exploration and performance of new, sometimes temporary, identities.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, the linking in the mid-1980s of the production of music in Austin, Texas, to the requirements and values of the US recording industry nationally, resulted in economic, musical, and cultural shifts in the scene, and in the 'subjective qualities of any identities it might produce'.<sup>54</sup> Straw describes how, within the context of the 'Culture of Cities' project, which was an interdisciplinary research project studying the culture of four cities (Toronto, Montreal, Dublin, and Berlin), scenes 'emerge from the excesses of sociability that surround the pursuit of interests, or which fuel ongoing innovation and experimentation within the cultural life of cities'.<sup>55</sup>

Travis Jackson's *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene* (2012) relates to Straw and Shank in focusing on scenes as a location of the creation of meaning and identity. It follows on from Berliner and Monson in foregrounding the importance of understanding performance and meaning in performance from the viewpoint of practitioner. It is Jackson's work that informs the approach taken in this study in terms of the importance of understanding and analysing the construction of meaning and identity as taking place within a jazz scene. Although work within ethnomusicology and historical musicology has made strides at attempting to understand jazz within the cultures that have created it, according to Jackson, research still primarily focuses on the product of jazz performance—in this case, commercially released recordings—rather than addressing directly the musical event.

It was Jackson's work that highlighted for me the importance of understanding and analysing jazz performance through the 'larger network of individuals, venues, record labels, educational institutions and media that comprised the scene'.<sup>56</sup> Jackson attempts to make the study of performance more direct by departing from the analysis of recordings and taking a participant-observer position at the actual musical events he

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51 Straw, 'Cultural Scenes', 412

52 Shank, *Dissonant Identities: The Rock'n'Roll Scene in Austin, Texas*, 122 as cited in Straw, 2004.

53 Shank, Preface, x.

54 *Ibid.*

55 Straw, 'Cultural Scenes', 412.

56 Jackson, 15.



analysed. In the case of a recorded event, he is also able to reflect at a later date; otherwise, he is left to depend on his field notes. This extra step has a greater significance than is perhaps perceived at first glance. Through his knowledge and engagement with the scene, Jackson is able to analyse musical events on a number of different levels, including a blues aesthetic, scene, ritual, and so on. The analysis of the events occurring through the lens of different frames possibly allows for a new understanding of how New York musicians can take these different elements to construct a musical event that has meaning for all of the participants.

Jackson advocates ethnographic fieldwork and performance interaction studies, arguing that work outside the traditional academic institutions has been overlooked in academic communities, with the consequence being a lack of contributions from the perspective of African American writers. This has resulted in the under-emphasis of African American perspectives in jazz academia, which is particularly noticeable considering the importance of jazz in the discourse of African American cultural heritage.<sup>57</sup>

Travis Jackson describes a scene as encompassing both space and time in complementary ways.<sup>58</sup> A scene implies a sense of space that participants transform into something useable and meaningful. It can also denote a time or a passing of time, ‘a brief episode in the larger unfolding of a narrative, an identifiable, bounded temporal space that is not fully meaningful when removed from its narrative context’.<sup>59</sup> Straw defines a scene as designating ‘particular clusters of social and cultural activity without specifying the nature of the boundaries which circumscribe them’.<sup>60</sup>

Turning toward the concept of scene as a locale for the study of jazz does not come without its problems. As Straw points out, ‘How useful is a term which designates both the effervescence of our favourite bar and the sum total of all global phenomena surrounding a subgenre of Heavy Metal music?’<sup>61</sup> Straw argues that the use of ‘scene’ may be useful because it is both flexible and anti-essentialist, and works well to describe cultural entities whose borders are invisible and elastic. In this study, I have encountered numerous reactions from people on discovering that I was researching the Dublin jazz scene. While some people not involved in music questioned whether an

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>58</sup> Jackson, 52-69

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-55.

<sup>60</sup> Straw, ‘Cultural Scenes’, 412.

<sup>61</sup> Straw, ‘Scenes and Sensibilities’, 248.

Irish jazz scene existed at all, some musicians questioned my definition of the scene, sometimes concerned that it may not represent their contribution.

In terms of outlining boundaries for this study, I have settled on a deliberately inclusive definition of jazz that inevitably includes aspects that some participants would not include in their own definition of the scene. This means, in practice, that if a participant considers their activity to be part of the scene, then I have included it in my consideration of the scene. My inclusive definition works at both the experimental and the conservative ends of the spectrum. It includes both the music of free improvisers and the activities of musicians whose main concern is the entertainment of the general public, *if* they or other participants in the musical activity consider themselves to be part of the jazz scene. To dismiss the activities of one group or the other from consideration as part of the scene would be merely imposing my own definition of what is and what is not jazz on to it, which is precisely the reason why jazz is of interest as a way in which people from different perspectives use the same concept to their own advantage.

Both the singer entertaining tourists with a performance of ‘Summertime’ and the ‘free improvisation’ musician are embracing concepts of jazz to create and maintain an identity that has meaning for them and their peers, within the context of their performance or practice. It is also important to remember that jazz performance does not fall into the two categories of ‘entertainment’ and ‘art’, but instead participants create meaning through an infinite number of ways of engaging with a wider society. That the resulting music may sound completely different highlights the ability of jazz to be utilised to fulfil different cultural and social needs.

### **1.8 Backyard Ethnography**

The relatively recent development in ethnomusicology of researchers studying a culture of which they are a part, even if they are not intimately involved, was perhaps spearheaded by Finnegan’s *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town*. Finnegan asks questions about cultural events that are of great importance to people yet go in many ways unnoticed and unstudied. She investigates the make-up of the musical activities and how such activities are sustained. Using the case study of Milton Keynes, Finnegan aims to ‘uncover and reflect on some of these little-questioned but fundamental dimensions of local music-making, and their place in both urban life and

our cultural traditions more generally'.<sup>62</sup> I borrow from Finnegan in her aim to provide an empirically based ethnography of music in a particular place at a particular time.

Finnegan challenges three assumptions commonly held in music studies. Firstly, that music or music-making can be ranked in some sort of order from worst to best, instead of focusing on how music making is framed by people's view of it, each style of music being viewed differently by those listening to it. Secondly, that the actual practice of music, 'of what people actually *do* on the ground', is of secondary importance to standard musicological analysis techniques.<sup>63</sup> Finnegan challenges the then still standard method of looking at 'finalised musical works' rather than the practice of performance.<sup>64</sup> The final assumption that Finnegan challenges is that 'professional' music makers are more worthy of study than 'local' music makers.

Finnegan's work considers how musical activities are involved in the creation of identity in the lives of the amateur musicians she studies. Her work began a movement, with scholars looking for the first time at music in their own backyard, as opposed to the concert hall or conducting fieldwork overseas. Finnegan drew my focus to the attention given to the top-tier jazz musicians in almost all academic studies on jazz scenes up to this point, not taking into consideration the vast number of musicians who call themselves jazz musicians, or at least musicians who play jazz amongst other styles. Furthermore, there are musicians who play an unlabelled (by themselves at least) style of music that they would (sometimes begrudgingly) concede owes part of its development to the jazz tradition. It is the myriad combinations of these people that participate in the vast majority of jazz activities in any local scene.

Another ethnographer who studied a scene in which he was involved is Stephen Cottrell, an academic and performer, who, like me, came to academia later in life, after a considerable period as a professional musician. In his ethnographic study of professional music making in London, he argues that the differences between musicology and ethnomusicology could be exploited to benefit the study of Western art music, in his case, by focusing on the local. Published in 2004, Cottrell's work groups ethnographic writing about Western art music into three categories: those dealing with the relationship of ethnomusicology and the music from a theoretical perspective; those

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<sup>62</sup> Finnegan, 4.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 8. (Italics in original)

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 9. (Italics in original)

dealing with institutions of some kind (orchestras, music schools); and finally those dealing with scenes. Cottrell states that this final approach ‘has been infrequently adopted thus far’.<sup>65</sup> In his own research, Cottrell investigates the making of Western art music by professional musicians in London. He addresses many issues, including self-identity and ritual activity, that have direct parallels with the jazz scene.

Groundbreaking at the time as an ethnographic study of his own place of work, Cottrell acknowledges an opposition to his work being described as ‘ethnomusicological’ due to the lack of ‘music’, that is, a distinct lack of musical examples or analysis. Cottrell recognises the difficulty in finding a space for his study. In having used ethnographic methods while being based on Western art music and being spatially located in one of the centres of that tradition, it did not fit neatly into commonly held ideas of ethnicity.<sup>66</sup>

Cottrell partakes in what can be considered an almost traditional ‘defence of methodology’ in ethnomusicology writings that explore the periphery of academic agendas. He presents a brief critique of historical musicology, including the encroachment of ‘new musicology’ on traditional ethnomusicological spaces (as well as psychoanalysis, semiotics, gender studies, and so on). In contrast to Finnegan, Cottrell focuses more on the ‘professional’ end of the ‘amateur/professional’ spectrum. He examines how the matrix of community is ‘imagined’ by musicians, the methods used by the musicians to sustain it, and the ideologies and events that are important within it.<sup>67</sup>

### **1.9 Amateur and Professional**

While Finnegan’s study focuses on the amateur end of the spectrum and Cottrell’s on the professional, both acknowledge the difficulty with categories such as amateur and professional, recognising that a more in-depth examination of musicians’ lives often reveals the many grey areas that they inhabit. Finnegan argues that most studies of modern musicians either focus on ‘the more professional practitioners (though often without saying so) or else take the amateur/professional distinction as given and so not worth exploring’.<sup>68</sup>

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65 Cottrell, Stephen: *Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2004), 7.

66 *Ibid.*, 1-8.

67 *Ibid.*, 8-15

68 Finnegan, 12–13.

Whereas Finnegan examines different ‘hidden musicians’ within a spatial locality, who are to be found at various positions within the spectrum between amateur and professional, Jackson focuses primarily on top-tier professional musicians. While he states his intent to investigate performance and meaning on the New York jazz scene, his study excludes contributions (at least in print) from the countless musicians whose participation in the scene occurs outside the established institutions of performance and media. Jackson’s focus is on musicians that are known to jazz fans and musicians internationally, and while this gives his work a high level of interest, it is difficult to argue that this is a picture of an entire scene.

The jazz scene of Dublin is equally complex regarding professional categorisation. While most musicians I spoke to, and others with whom I am acquainted, identify as a ‘jazz musician’, I did not speak to, and do not know of any, who make their entire living, or even the majority of it, from playing jazz. Most make their living from music-related activities, such as teaching or performing styles other than jazz; however, there are also both prominent and lesser-known musicians who obtain their income from non-music-related activities. The amateur/professional divide, then, is not clear in the jazz scene, with many musicians considered ‘professional’ not relying on music for their financial stability.

### **1.10 Race and Ethnicity**

In 2000, Radano put forward the view that musicology in all its forms had sought to deny a racial dimension in music. Traditional musicology’s empirically based objectivity and its lack of concern with socio-cultural issues such as race, gender, and class, Radano argued, had the effect of silencing discussion on such issues within the discipline. In particular, Europe is singled out as a place where, historically speaking, race does not exist.

Our basic argument is that discourses about music fundamentally derive from the construction and deployment of racial categories, just as these same categories grow ever more complicated and confused as a result of their sonic discursive projection within the metaphysics of music.<sup>69</sup>

While key texts on jazz address race, my initial ethnographic enquiries seemed to suggest that race was not a topic that the Irish jazz musician felt any desire or need to

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<sup>69</sup> *Music and the Racial Imagination*, eds. Ronald M. Radano and Philip V. Bohlman, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 6–7.

discuss. In my interviews it was ‘a given’ that African American culture was a primary source of inspiration, and African Americans figured prominently among influences and listening lists, yet—without the help of leading and direct questions—none of those interviewed raised race as a topic of conversation. I was forced to reflect both upon Radano’s assertion that silence in musicological studies on race is not an apolitical act, and also on Berliner’s and Monson’s example of the musicians (or, in my case, musicians, audience, promoters, and other participants) being the best point of departure for any ethnographic study.<sup>70</sup> Of course, Berliner and Monson were talking to people a lot closer to the origins of jazz, people for whom, it could be argued, the cultural connections to the historic beginnings of the music were stronger than is the case with the cosmopolitan connections of contemporary Dublin jazz musicians.

To be clear, I am not constructing a hierarchy of jazz creators here. Acknowledging that American and, in particular, African American culture has a closer connection to the musical, social, and cultural history of jazz is not diminishing the importance of jazz in the lives of people elsewhere, nor the legitimacy or strength of the music that they create. Monson pays particular attention to the issues of race and culture. She states: ‘In every generation there have been non-African American students of jazz who have attempted to explain the power of African American music with extremely mixed results.’ Monson continues by saying that ‘[f]or every contribution of musical detail and understanding, one can find a glib and superficial cultural explanation that reproduces and reinforces the most recurrent and virulent racial stereotypes of African American communities’.<sup>71</sup>

In this case, I found that I wanted to illuminate the ‘racial imagination’ from its hidden location—to acknowledge race in jazz music, no matter how far removed from the African American communities that figure so strongly in the history of the music.

### **1.11 A Blues Aesthetic**

Jazz has always been problematic concerning definitions. Many musicians choose not to identify strongly with the term jazz. They consider themselves just musicians, or improvising musicians, even though conversation concerning influences may routinely

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70 See also: Lewis, George E.: ‘Gittin’ to Know Y’all: Improvised Music, Interculturalism and the Racial Imagination’, *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation*, (2004), 1.

71 Monson, 6.

go back to jazz artists, while the day-in-day-out ‘persona’ of such a musician may have a strong association with jazz.

Travis Jackson introduces a conception of a blues aesthetic that resonates strongly with a conception of jazz that is most widely practised worldwide. ‘A blues aesthetic, as such, is the sum of the reflective and normative assertions that musicians have made regarding processes of performance, interaction, and evaluation. In the simplest terms, it is constituted by (learned) practices derived from and continually fed by the interaction between African American musics and cultures and others.’<sup>72</sup>

The blues aesthetic possibly provides a theoretical solution to Nicholas Payton’s argument that ‘jazz was created by black people but belongs to everyone.’<sup>73</sup> Discourse on race in jazz is often dominated by claim and counterclaim of authenticity and ownership. Although it is easy to sense the anger, it can be more difficult to closely identify the issues in a specific case. Although the majority of the elements of the blues aesthetic can relate to the Dublin jazz musician’s experience, the interviews initially sparked no responses concerning issues of ethnicity or race. The elements of individual voice, developing balance in performance, understanding the cultural foundations of the music, bringing something to the music, allowing space for others to bring something, and being open to spiritual transcendence, all found in Jackson’s blues aesthetic, are certainly elements.

Jackson’s blues aesthetic speaks to a socially and culturally constructed set of practices that relate to both spatial and temporal locations. The Dublin jazz scene of 2016, while engaging with a blues aesthetic on numerous levels and at a wide variety of times and spaces, also has spaces that attempt alternative aesthetic aims. The strong resonances of ‘originality’ and ‘innovation’ within Dublin and European jazz discourse encourages musicians to engage with aesthetic constructions that depart from the widely accepted practice of jazz, not only to a perceived binary alternative of free improvisation but also through engagement with the entire remit of influences encountered by musicians, in particular young musicians, throughout their musical lives. I am not implying that the music of Jackson’s study, New York ‘straight ahead’ jazz, is less original or innovative than European jazz, although Stuart Nicholson may disagree; in any case, I would avoid

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<sup>72</sup> Jackson, 126.

<sup>73</sup> Payton, Nicholas: ‘On Ben Ratliff’s Four Pianists On The Rise...’, Nicholas Payton, (2011) <<http://nicholaspayton.wordpress.com/2011/10/23/on-ben-ratliffs-four-pianists-on-the-rise/>> [Accessed 2 October 2013].

any such generalisations.<sup>74</sup> I do argue, however, that when viewed at a scene level, there are differing forces and systems at play that influence the perceived meanings within jazz performance.

## **1.12 Methodology**

Jazz studies, incorporating the new jazz studies, has proven itself to be an interdisciplinary undertaking. Similarly, this study takes a two-pronged approach to studying the Dublin jazz scene. While the vast majority of this study is based on material gleaned from my fieldwork and interviews, discussed below, the background to the contemporary scene is examined first by way of examining archival records to gain an understanding of jazz performance and its predecessors in Dublin. Due to the lack of any historical studies concerning the jazz scene, academic or otherwise, this is a necessary step, both in order to gain an understanding of where the current scene evolved from, and to lay a basis for future research. Further discussion on the role of the historic overview takes place in section 2.1

### **1.12.1 Fieldwork**

The chapters following the historical overview utilise ethnographic techniques to a much greater degree. The last twenty years have seen an increase in ethnographies concerning the relationships between music, gender, place, and globalisation. David Grazian provides a summary of ethnographic research in the sociology of music, beginning with the Chicago school, which provided three monographs in the late 1920s and early 1930s giving accounts of how popular music scenes of the time ‘operate within a larger cultural economy of urban nightlife’.<sup>75</sup> These studies left a legacy in the use of the case study as a legitimate form of sociological inquiry, on the attention to participant observation and other types of ethnographic fieldwork, and in putting an emphasis on the interactional field in which urban culture is produced, marketed, and consumed.<sup>76</sup> They continue to influence ethnographic work in the sociology of music.<sup>77</sup>

Following on from the Chicago school, Grazian reports on ethnomusicologists and folklorists focusing on rural musicians. He critiques folklorists’ and ethnomusicologists’ work concerning Mississippi Delta blues music, in addition to work on Chicago blues singers and West African tribal performers, as descriptive rather than theoretical,

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74 Nicholson, Stuart: *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, (New York: Routledge, 2005)

75 Grazian, David: ‘Opportunities for ethnography in the sociology of music’, *Poetics*, 32, (2004), 198.

76 See, for example, Reckless, Walter C.: *Vice in Chicago*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933).

77 Grazian, 197–198.



impressionistic rather than systematic, and their orientation romantic rather than critical.<sup>78</sup> According to Grazian, while ethnomusicology was unable to analyse how ‘more contemporary professional, economic and institutional forces structure the production of popular music’, sociologists, including Howard Becker and Robert Faulkner, were better equipped to explore ‘the commercial contexts in which musicians produce their craft not only as inspired artists, but as employed professionals as well’.<sup>79</sup>

The focus on production in studies up until the mid-1970s was not only due to the popularity of research on occupations and on the social construction of deviance at this time, but also the influence of the Frankfurt School’s critique of mass culture. The rendering of consumers of popular music as unworthy of ethnographic attention by the denial of their human agency led to a lack of ethnography concerning the consumption of music. From the mid-1970s, however, work began, in particular around the University of Birmingham’s Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, investigating how youth subcultures ‘actively incorporate music into their overall lifestyles’.<sup>80</sup> These studies looked at the culture of punks, skinheads, bikers, hippies, and Rastafarians, with later studies researching youth culture among working-class hard rock fans, British dance clubs, and indie rock clubs.

While these studies ‘focus on collective processes and in-group interaction’, more recent work has focused on the relationship of music to the self.<sup>81</sup> It is in this area that the researcher/performer identity begins to be combined, in works such as Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr’s *Race Music* and Stacy Holman Jones’ *Emotional Space*.<sup>82</sup> In the field of jazz studies, the researcher/performer role appears to be more common than in musicology as a whole. While not based on empirical evidence, this became clear to me while attending the Rhythm Changes Conferences, a series of jazz studies conferences, where it appeared the majority of researchers also played jazz and included reference to that fact in their biographies or papers.

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78 *Ibid.*, 199.

79 *Ibid.*

80 *Ibid.*, 200.

81 *Ibid.*, 202.

82 Ramsey, Guthrie P: *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-hop*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003) vii ; Jones, Stacy Holman: ‘Emotional Space: Performing the Resistive Possibilities of Torch Singing’, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8, (2002). See also: Jones, Stacy Holman: *Torch Singing: Performing Resistance and Desire from Billie Holiday to Edith Piaf*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman Altamira, 2007).

In the field of ethnomusicology in 1960, Mantle Hood famously made a call for ethnomusicologists to attain at least a basic degree of musicality, or what he called ‘bi-musicality’, in the music about which they theorised.<sup>83</sup> Addressing the readership of the journal *Ethnomusicology*, in which the paper was published, and focusing primarily on Westerners studying Eastern music and vice versa, Mantle goes on to outline some of the possible hurdles a Western-trained musician may encounter when tackling a music foreign to their own culture, based largely on his experience with ensembles at the University of California at Los Angeles.

The renowned anthropologist/ethnomusicologist John Blacking reported, in his seminal book *How Musical is Man?* (1973), on the use of performance as a research technique, citing his work with Venda musicians.<sup>84</sup> In addition, in *Ethnomusicology*, Jos Koning joined the call for the use of performance in music research in ‘The Fieldworker as Performer: Fieldwork Objectives and Social Roles in County Clare, Ireland’, in which he argued that ‘active musical participation may yield data that probably cannot be collected with the use of any other technique’.<sup>85</sup> Koning notes that visiting fieldworkers can be regarded as fitting into a role in a given society, as student, teacher, or ensemble member, for example. Certain roles may directly influence the behaviour of other members of the society. It is the responsibility of the researcher ‘to analyze the possible distortion that may result from the active use of bi-musicality as a research tool’.<sup>86</sup>

On the topic of using performance as a research tool, Stephen Slawek states, in his 1994 article in *The International Journal of Musicology*, that:

Especially in the improvisational music of North India, such a performance has vast potential for poetic affect and critical interpretation. I submit that competent performance of Hindustani music by a Western researcher amounts to an experimental translation of a cultural experience that may potentially equal a written statement in depth of intellectual engagement and most probably will surpass a written statement in the intensity of its emotive affect.<sup>87</sup>

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83 Hood, Mantle: ‘The Challenge of “Bi-Musicality”’, *Ethnomusicology*, (1960), 4.

84 Blacking, John: *How Musical Is Man?*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973).

85 Koning, Jos: ‘The fieldworker as performer: Fieldwork objectives and social roles in County Clare, Ireland’, *Ethnomusicology*, (1980), 429.

86 *Ibid.*

87 Slawek, Stephen: ‘The Study of Performance Practice as a Research Method: A South Asian Example’, *International Journal of Musicology*, (1994), 3.

John Baily, in his chapter in *The New (Ethno)Musicologies* (2008), provides a brief history of noted ethnomusicologists who have, and who have not, learnt an instrument of another culture while in the field. Paul Berliner is mentioned for his role as a mbira player and singer of Shona songs. Baily does not note that Berliner also rekindled his learning of the jazz trumpet during his research on jazz. His studies allowed him to take lessons and elicit responses from jazz musicians, while being able to directly experience, as a practitioner, the concepts about which his informants spoke.<sup>88</sup> Likewise, Monson had studied jazz performance and history and had worked as a professional trumpeter before her academic research in jazz began. She drew on the network of musicians she had met in this context as part of her later research, and also chose to study jazz drumming.<sup>89</sup> The insights she gained from her lessons were ‘absolutely critical’ to her understanding of the rhythm section.<sup>90</sup>

It is possible that Baily knew about Berliner’s trumpet performance history but chose not to mention it, perhaps this being another case of where jazz is not quite ‘other’ enough for ethnomusicology.<sup>91</sup> Nonetheless, Baily states that ‘[m]usic making provides opportunities for a kind of participation by the ethnomusicologist which is generally denied to anthropologists using the methodology of participant-observation’.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, in his closing paragraphs, he touches upon a development embraced by art studies, yet about which musicology and ethnomusicology are relatively silent: that of performance as not only a tool in research but as an outcome of the research itself, becoming what Baily calls performative ethnomusicology.<sup>93</sup>

The journey from ethnography to performance is well summarised by Wong in her chapter ‘Moving: From Performance to Performative Ethnography and Back Again’ in *Shadows in the Field* (2008). Laying out the ongoing problems of ethnography as including ‘the false binary of the insider/outsider, colonial baggage, and the empiricism still lurking behind a solidly humanistic anthropology and ethnomusicology’, Wong charts the journey of praxis from Mantle Hood to present times, noting the changing

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88 Baily, John: ‘Ethnomusicology, Intermusability, and Performance Practice’, in *The New (Ethno)musicologies*, ed. Henry Stobart (Chicago: Scarecrow Press, 2008), 117–132; Berliner, 9.

89 Monson, 11–12.

90 *Ibid.*, 17.

91 Borgo, David as quoted in Ake, David Andrew: *Jazz cultures*, (University of California Press, 2002), 1.

92 Baily, 126.

93 *Ibid.*, 131–132.

relevance and reasons behind performance from an ethnomusicological viewpoint.<sup>94</sup> She details that while Hood (whose teacher was one of ethnomusicology's founders, Jaap Kunst) made the call for 'bimusicality', his research and theories on Javanese music were empirical in nature and contained little in ethnographic work. Wong tells how Marc Perlman showed that Hood's approach influenced research on Javanese music theory, and although he spent many years playing Javanese gamelan and learning directly from Javanese musicians, 'they are essentially not present in his analytical work'.<sup>95</sup> Perlman essentially argues that the theoretical framework provided by Hood and Kunst was ultimately rejected by some Javanese musicians, who presented a differing paradigm on the understanding of their music.

Wong sums up many musician-researchers' feelings when she asks 'whether there are effective ways to speak to all such readers at once and still satisfy myself as both an ethnomusicologist and as a taiko player'.<sup>96</sup> The problem of translating music onto the page, in a way that is relevant to both performer and researcher, Wong calls a problem of 'multiple translative shifts'.<sup>97</sup> These multiple translative shifts, or the challenge of translating musical experience into words, are described by Monson in *Saying Something* as 'one of the most fundamental frustrations of musical scholarship'.<sup>98</sup>

Wong treats ethnographic work as a performative practice. Simply put, if performance is a site of cultural production, then it is important to look at the realities created through performance.<sup>99</sup> She argues that musical performance should be valued as a statement of that research. While, ultimately, I decided not to include performance as a statement of research, I nonetheless engaged with the concept of performative practice as an understanding that my own research took place in-between and during performance. The translative shifts discussed by Wong and Monson were also experienced in the imagination as I attempted to frame the performative experience into thoughts to be discussed with the band or audience members at a later point in the evening.

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94 Wong, Deborah: 'Moving: From Performance to Performative Ethnography and Back Again', in *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, eds. Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 76–89.

95 *Ibid.*, 81.

96 *Ibid.*, 77.

97 *Ibid.*, 81.

98 Monson, 74.

99 Wong, Deborah: *Speak it Louder: Asian Americans Making Music*, Pap/Com (London: Routledge, 2004), 4.

Although the resulting thesis contains relatively little of ‘the music itself’, it was these performative events that fed my ethnographic research. Even if I am unable, like those before me, to fully translate the music into words, the performative experience showed that music does contain meaning. Deep, rich meaning that can be both personal, direct and probing, yet also uncertain, unclear and vague. The contestations and negotiations that are present in jazz scenes are also present in the music and our experience of the music. Without the experience of being a performer within the scene, this thesis would have been a very different end product.

The period of study was from 2011 to 2016 and my fieldwork consisted of attending gigs and jazz events, both those of my peers and my own—an activity that was part of my normal routine. I also took field notes during rehearsals of my own groups and groups I was playing with, sometimes recording the rehearsal for further note taking after the event. Sparked by both a theoretical interest in the researcher-practitioner, and by my day-to-day practice as a musician, I wanted to incorporate performance into the collection of data. I recorded many of my performances with a portable digital video recorder. After asking permission of the band members, I would also turn on the recorder as we were setting up, allowing me to review our conversations in addition to the music.

To try to translate the living experience of playing music and participating in a musical event, I took field notes using dictation immediately after the performance, if possible. For me, the easiest method was to record them in the car after the gig, using my phone as an audio recorder. I tried to recall as much as possible in a thick description style, starting with arriving at the gig, the greetings, the interactions, the clothes, the venue, the audience, and the music. As a performer not used to fieldwork, I found it important to try to record as much data as possible. Directly after the gig I found this information easy to recall, whereas, after a period has passed, it was a different type of recollection. This process was one of the most difficult. Immediately after a performance, recording field notes was one of the last things I wanted to do and many times I simply forgot—my mind in a completely different space to that of researcher. When I did carry out this task, though, it often proved invaluable, both for material for research as a self-reflexive exercise that provided me with a new perspective on my own position within my ‘jazz culture’, and often my overall socio-cultural position in society.

The following day, I would attempt a retrospective review of the data while viewing the video recording of the performance, taking notes on both musical and social events that took place. I used this data in both direct musical ways ('I felt my performance was loose there, I liked my approach there') and to isolate themes that occurred in musical and social interaction on and off the bandstand.

I also used the performance space as an arena to introduce myself to audience members and to conduct informal interviews regarding why they had come to that particular venue that night, whether it was to see a particular musician, or if they were a tourist passing by. I was also surprised by the variety of responses I got: some people were particularly keen to inform me of their close relationship with jazz, and how they loved jazz 'at home' and now sought it out in their new home.

### **1.12.2 Interviews**

In addition to collecting information from the use of field notes, the other main source of data for this study comes from interviews with the participants. In contrast to the majority of ethnographic studies on jazz scenes, I was interested in interviewing not only the 'top tier' musicians who dominate the scene with international reputations, but also people from the entire network of individuals who keep an entire city's jazz scene alive. I interviewed thirty-two people:

Philip Bedford (Irish, audience member), Roland Bent (Irish, audience member), Cote Calmet (Peruvian, drummer), Bill Carrothers (American, pianist), Paul Clarvis (British, drummer, percussionist), Julien Colarossi (Italian, guitarist), Jim Doherty (Irish, pianist), Peter Erdei (Hungarian, bassist), Grainne Farren (Irish, journalist), Dave Fleming (Irish, bassist), Gerry Godley (Irish, promotor), Patrick Groenland (Irish, guitarist), Ronan Guilfoyle (Irish, bassist), Matthew Jacobson (Irish, drummer), Cormac Kenevey (Irish, vocalist), Kenneth Killeen (Irish, promotor), David King (American, drummer), Shane Latimer (Irish, guitarist), Tony McDonald (Irish, trombonist), Edel Meade (Irish, vocalist), Nigel Mooney (Irish, guitarist, vocalist), John Moriarty (Irish, guitarist), Carole Nelson (Irish, pianist, saxophonist, vocalist), Darragh O'Kelly (Irish, pianist), David O'Rourke (Irish, guitarist), Dominic Reilly (Irish, promotor), Dylan Rynhart (Irish, pianist), Allen Smith (Irish, promotor), Francesco Turrisi (Italian, pianist, percussionist), Paul Wade (Irish, piano tuner), Katherine Wyers (Irish, saxophonist) and Yoon So-Young (South Korean, pianist).

As noted above, twenty-one are Irish or Irish-based professional musicians, four are promoters, two are audience members, one is a journalist and one is a piano tuner. Julien Colarossi, Ronan Guilfoyle, Matthew Jacobson, Shane Latimer, Dylan Rynhart and Francesco Turrisi have all taught regularly in Newpark Music Centre in some capacity, while Ronan Guilfoyle, Gerry Godley, Kenneth Killeen and Allen Smith have all been involved with the Improvised Music Company as board members or employees. Interviewees were between the ages of twenty-nine up to seventy-five. In addition to the two audience members I interviewed, I also spoke informally to countless more during fieldwork. At the early stages of this study I interviewed three ‘international’ musicians, Bill Carrothers, Paul Clarvis and David King. It was through the process of these three interviews that I began to see the benefits of investigating jazz within the context of a scene.

Due to my already having an ‘insider’ position in the Dublin jazz scene, I was able to approach participants either in conversation at a gig, on the phone or via email, to ask if they would be interested in taking part in an interview. With the exception of David King, I knew all of the other participants prior to interviewing them. Given the nature of the jazz scene, it would have been impossible to eliminate people I would call friends from the study, though my primary relationship with all the participants is through making music, rather than a social relationship. Making music in a jazz scene is, however, inherently social and my relationship with each of the participants reflects this.

My methodology for choosing interviewees was developed through the research period. I wanted to engage with a range of people who would represent a wide range of viewpoints on the Dublin jazz scene. This included interviewing people from different age ranges (from twenty-nine through to seventy-five). Twenty-four of the participants were born in Ireland, and the remaining six included two Americans, an Englishman, a Hungarian, an Italian, and a South Korean. Of these, all but Bill Carrothers (American), David King (American) and Paul Clarvis (English), the three ‘international’ musicians, were based in Ireland and consider themselves part of the Irish jazz scene.

Further effort was made to find representations from different sub-scenes within the greater Dublin jazz scene. Although I had a list of people who I felt were important to interview in the early stages of the research, I remained open to opportunities that presented themselves to interview people who I had not previously considered. Chance



meetings at gigs often led to an interview at a later date. Other interviews served specific purposes, such as ethnographic historical research, or information regarding a specific institution. Usually such interviews were dual purpose and did not dwell only on one aspect of the participant's interaction with the scene, but attempted to inquire about their wider engagement with it.

However, to attempt to categorise participants by their affiliations, relationships, or their participation in the various sub-scenes beyond the above statements of who has worked in Newpark Music Centre and who has been involved in the running of the Improvised Music Company, would be both impossible and an unfair position for me to take as researcher. A participant's own sense of identity was strongly tied to their relationship with the various institutions that make up the scene, but the relationships were complex, multi-faceted and constantly in construction. It was quite possible for someone to be working closely with an organisation and yet have negative comments about the same organisation, while at the same time going to the same organisation's defence if criticism was to come from other quarters.

I believe it is fair to say that within the selection of people interviewed there is representation of participants from all sub-scenes within the Dublin jazz scene, (see section 3.9) To attempt to group the participants into arbitrary stylistic groupings however, would be a disservice to the multiplicity of styles that these musicians take part in throughout their day-to-day activities.

Participants were given an information sheet outlining the project and the extent of their involvement, and were informed that any direct quotations concerning others would be confirmed before publication, and that they would be given the opportunity to anonymise any statement, or remove it altogether if anonymity was not possible. Within a small scene such as Dublin, direct quotations concerning other musicians could cause damage to relationships and careers, though, within an interview context, most musicians were careful to refrain from the personal types of comments that would frequently occur in a gig situation. In casual conversation, jazz musicians hold strong views as to how they see the scene and other players within it, and many of them would be used to having those conversations with me. Giving the interviewee control over his or her information not only satisfied the ethical requirements laid out by my home institution but also allowed the participant to know that they could speak safely without risk of harming personal relationships built up over time within the scene. Interviewing



people from different backgrounds was important to me in representing a cross section of scene participants, including those who had lived in Dublin all their lives, those who had moved there for work, like me, and even those who had arrived in Dublin only in the last few years.

Interviews took place at mutually convenient locations, including interviewees' homes, my home, cafes, restaurants, hotels and bars. On a few occasions, when a mutually convenient location and time could not be found, I conducted interviews over the phone. I also conducted short follow up interviews on the phone, particularly when I was searching for specific answers to questions, such as dates of events. I recorded all my interviews on either a Zoom H2 Audio Recorder or a Zoom H4n Handy Recorder and transferred the recordings to an encrypted folder on my Macbook laptop computer following the interview for transcription.

While I put similar questions to musicians, audience members, educators (who were always also musicians), and promoters, I adjusted my questions to be more relevant to the person I was interviewing. With audience members I was more interested in their relationship with the scene, how they had negotiated their own individual path into the jazz scene, and what they saw as important within it. For promoters, their own organisation was of importance, in addition to how they negotiated with musicians, audience members, and venues in their efforts to promote jazz performance. I always tried to keep returning to what was important to the interviewee and to identify themes that were of concern. By reviewing transcripts of conversation, I was then able to identify common themes. This format interviewing has been labelled semi-structured interviewing by Dr Tony Whitehead, who describes such interviews as following an 'open-ended approach that is characteristic of ethnographic and qualitative research'.<sup>100</sup> Semi-structured interviews attempt to gain an understanding of the context and meaning of the participants answers through various forms of probing.

I took inspiration from Berliner's approach to his interviews with over fifty jazz musicians for his book *Thinking in Jazz*. Originally armed with a twenty-five page set of questions, Berliner quickly resorted to drawing selectively from the questions, beginning with questions regarding each musician's own background and their first

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100 Whitehead, Tony L.: *Basic Classical Ethnographic Research Methods*, (2005), 18. <<http://www.cusag.umd.edu/documents/workingpapers/classicalethnomethods.pdf>> [Accessed 27 January 2013].

experiences with jazz, moving on to questions regarding musical thinking and improvisation.<sup>101</sup>

In a similar way, I asked musicians to describe their musical beginnings and their first associations with jazz in Dublin. I went on to ask them if they identified with a jazz scene, and if they considered themselves jazz musicians. Focusing on the jazz scene in New York, ‘the world’s largest jazz community, made up of artists from all over the country’, Berliner found it important to ask questions of people of different backgrounds.<sup>102</sup> While most of his participants were African American, he also collected material from other ethnic groups, men and women, instrumentalists and vocalists, and people at all stages in their career. This was also important in my own study, the participants being not only those born in Ireland, but also including the wide variety of people who have made Dublin their home, for whatever reason.

Because this was a study about a group of musicians and related people, I asked about their relationships with other musicians, how it related to their playing and career, how they found their musical partners, and how they negotiated business and friendships within the same environment. I asked musicians to speak about their relationship to the audience, who they felt their audience was, and how they related to them. I also enquired about how people related to Dublin venues, and what they thought about them, and about their relationship with educational institutions and funding agencies. Throughout the interviews, I tried to be attentive to what the musicians themselves appeared to think was important and what they wanted to talk about. This usually produced the most free-flowing conversation from the interviewee. Questions regarding musicians’ financial situation, whether they survived solely on performing or had another source of income, and how they felt about the financial side of being a jazz musician were posed. Finally, I asked them questions regarding their cultural identity, both as ‘Irish’ (or Ireland-based) jazz musicians and as Europeans or non-Europeans. After transcribing the interviews, I tagged the answers depending on what they related to; typical tags included ‘identity’, ‘styles’, ‘Dublin jazz scene history’, ‘relating to other musicians’, and ‘finance’.

One of the features of the ethnographic method of inquiry is the vast amount of data that it reveals and the subsequent problems of how to organise and analyse that data. To

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101 Berliner, 6.

102 *Ibid.*, 5.

address this, I used the writing application Scrivener on Mac OS X ([www.literatureandlatte.com](http://www.literatureandlatte.com)). Scrivener enables information to be collected within one large file it refers to as a 'project'. Furthermore it allows the 'tagging' of information with 'keywords' of the users choice. There are many ways to use such a programme, but in my case I transcribed the interviews into Scrivener and tagged different sections of them according to their themes. For example, I used keywords such as audience, economics, Europe, festivals, funding, group dynamics, identity, IMC, learning jazz, musical decisions and many more. Thus I was able to determine which themes occurred on a more regular basis, and sort and view the data pertaining to that theme in one place. In the beginning I transcribed every word of every interview in Scrivener. As anyone who has undertaken such a task knows, this activity is extremely time consuming and produces so much data as to almost make in unwieldy. Over time I reverted to the common method used in ethnomusicological writing of allowing periods of conversation that did not pertain to the study to go without being transcribed, and only to take notes on some sections rather than taking down each word verbatim. Of course, during each interview, certain sections were pertinent and were taken down word for word. In addition to storing vast amounts of interview data, Scrivener also allows for the storage of other research materials within the one project, including PDF files, web pages, images, video and sound files. This allowed for easily moving between research material and the research document itself.

The reader may notice that some of the people I interviewed do not come up subsequently in the study. This is in no part due to a lack of interesting information obtained during such interviews. Often times I have anonymised people's comments, if they were in anyway personal, or could cause offence. Other times, interviews contributed to a wider sense of the scene, giving valuable information regarding how people negotiated their participation, however I did not always use quotations from these interviews, instead allowing the data to feed into my overall understanding of the scene.

### **1.12.3 Theoretical Perspectives**

Rather than beginning with a theoretical perspective and applying it throughout regardless of the data obtained, I took the approach of exploring a number of different approaches as they presented themselves throughout the study. I then further explored

those that resonated with the study and discarded those that felt like they were being forced on top of the data set. In studying a music scene that I was involved with personally, it was important to have theoretical frameworks through which to analyse the data. Doing so provided ways of understanding the scene outside of my own experience of it.

In the case of the Dublin jazz scene, it soon became clear the importance of the relationship of the self to the wider scene. The study of how the individual exists within a wider field can be addressed by turning to the sociology of culture.<sup>103</sup> In her influential work *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-garde* (1995), Georgina Bown took up the call of several writers working with the sociology of culture, to investigate institutions and the practices of cultural production and reproduction, paying particular attention to those of high culture.<sup>104</sup> In doing so she addressed an absence of studies devoted to the ‘official’ or ‘state-funded or subsidized culture’, and also answered calls for ‘a sociological aesthetics that would escape the universalizing and metaphysical character of traditional aesthetics, and critical research on the institutions, practices, and ideologies of particular areas of cultural production.’<sup>105</sup>

In doing so, Born turns to two theorists who ground much of my own study, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. Much of Foucault’s work emphasises the constraining and enabling nature of power. His theories concerning power, discourse and knowledge came about partly due to his career spanning both the structuralist and post-structuralist movements. Born’s study reveals institutions and practices of cultural production and reproduction as sites that deal with ‘the politics of microsocial relations, with the lived experience of unequal power relations as they are encountered and endured in everyday life.’<sup>106</sup> For Born, this is the intersection of feminist themes with the work of Foucault, allowing for a close reading of the particular forms of authority, legitimation and power that exist within discourses of art and culture.<sup>107</sup> These themes are explored throughout this thesis, particularly in Chapters 4 and 5, where I demonstrate the ways in which power, as it functions in the practices of everyday life, constrains and enables activity

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103 Born, Georgina: *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-garde*, (University of California Press, 1995), 23.

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 *Ibid.*, 25.

107 *Ibid.*

within the Dublin jazz scene, in particular through the relationships of individuals with institutions.

While explicit references to Bourdieu's work primarily feature in section 4.2.4, his concepts of *habitus*, field and capital permeate much of this work. *Habitus* is a term coined by Bourdieu to describe how an agent's actions are confined by 'conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence'.<sup>108</sup> Artistic and cultural practices take place within what he calls the 'field of cultural production', 'a structured arrangement of transactions and exchanges which is both a context and outcome of objective social forces and the strategic, habitual actions of the agents that occupy its parameters'.<sup>109</sup> Bourdieu uses capital beyond its traditional economic sense to refer also to economic, symbolic, cultural and social capital that agents within fields strive to obtain. Indeed, much of Bourdieu's writings concern the power relationships that exist within fields of cultural production, particularly in agents' efforts to obtain or have access to the various capitals.

### 1.13 Summary

In the last thirty years the academic field of jazz studies has come of age. Embracing a pluralist approach, scholars are critically engaging with the field's past, present and potential future as well as the music, people, places and communities that have been, and are involved in its production. Much work has been done in understanding jazz performance from the perspective of its practitioners and incorporating the developments of cultural studies into what was once a field attempting to carve a space for itself within musicology departments by adopting the same methodologies and paradigms as empirical musicology. While jazz studies now exists comfortably within musicology departments, its scholars can also be just as easily found in almost any of the academic disciplines.

At the early stages of this study, it became clear to me that my work needed to be placed within the confines of a community of practice. I was aware of the breadth of musical talent within the scene, and of the contestation and negotiation that was a part of existing within it. What I was not aware of, however, was the existence of a history or tradition of jazz performance beyond the presence of a handful of musicians of an older

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108 Bourdieu, Pierre: *The Logic of Practice*, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 53

109 Banks, Mark: 'MacIntyre, Bourdieu and the practice of jazz', *Popular Music*, 31, (2012), 79.

generation. There was a very real sense that jazz had only existed in Ireland since the appearance of guitarist Louis Stewart and his peers.

It quickly became clear to me that this common perception was at odds with what my research told me. The presence of a history of jazz performance within Dublin continued to reveal itself and with it, the existence of a community of musicians, listeners, critics and promoters for whom jazz performance had significant meaning. In short, the Dublin jazz scene has been a moving, shifting, constantly changing phenomenon for almost one hundred years. The lack of acknowledgment that is given to the past by participants of the contemporary scene perhaps speaks to the constant desire of creative movements to break from the past and make a claim of ownership on the present.

The Dublin jazz scene has been a source of contention for many participants as they attempt to negotiate their own path within the jazz narrative, while also surviving within a wider system that requires economic capital for survival. I believe that in understanding the contemporary scene, it is necessary to have a knowledge of what has come before. As such, I begin my study with a historical overview of jazz in Ireland.

## Chapter 2: Historical Overview of Jazz in Ireland

### 2.1 Introduction

The history of jazz in Europe has been written about extensively, albeit not to the same degree as its American history. Although the new jazz studies has broadened the perspectives taken on jazz, it too has had limited engagement with jazz outside of American contexts.<sup>1</sup> Luca Cerchiari, in *Eurojazzland* observes that while books concerning European regional histories and individuals add up to ‘more or less a hundred titles’, a ‘comprehensive book on jazz in Europe still doesn’t exist’.<sup>2</sup> An example of the more recent interest in the development of a European jazz identity is ‘Rhythm Changes: Jazz Cultures and European Identities’, a joint research programme funded by thirteen national funding agencies to ‘create collaborative, transnational research opportunities that will address major social, cultural, and political challenges facing Europe’.<sup>3</sup> One of the outcomes was a document detailing historical overviews of five partner countries, comprising Britain, Austria, Norway, the Netherlands, and Denmark.<sup>4</sup> While not purporting to offer comprehensive histories of jazz in each national setting, it presents ‘key issues, trends and discursive moments which have served to shape the canonicity of jazz in each participating country’.<sup>5</sup> Each of the sections draws from extensive research already conducted concerning the five nations. While the history of jazz in Europe has been researched and documented, Ireland has received very limited jazz scholarship, from either within or without the academy.

This overview aims to fill that gap in written knowledge and while not an attempt at a comprehensive history of jazz in Ireland, it will, nonetheless, address some of the major events and periods since the arrival of jazz in Ireland, drawing themes from these periods that still resonate with how jazz is understood in Ireland today. I take two approaches to this overview. For the period up to 1985, I rely almost entirely on archival sources. From c1985 onwards, I also draw from my own knowledge and

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1 Whyton, Tony: ‘Europe and the New Jazz Studies’, in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*, eds. Cerchiari, Luca, Cugny, Laurent and Kerschbaumer, Franz (Boston, Mass: Northeastern University Press, 2012), 367.

2 Cerchiari, Luca, Laurent Cugny, & Franz Kerschbaumer, eds.: *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*, (Boston, Mass: Northeastern University Press, 2012), vii.

3 ‘About | Rhythm Changes’, <<http://www.rhythmchanges.net/research/about/>> [Accessed 4 April 2016].

4 Martin, Peter J. and Tackley, Catherine: *Rhythm Changes: Historical overviews of five partner countries*, eds. Tony Whyton and Christa Bruckner-Haring (Institute for Jazz Research, University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, 2013).

5 *Ibid.*, 1.

observations from my time ‘in the scene’, and from interviews. For the most part, my interviews focus on the current scene rather than obtaining oral history.

It should also be noted that at the time the word ‘jazz’ arrived in Ireland, the country was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. However, the reception of jazz was mediated through the experiences of a nation that was in turmoil. Following on from the Easter Rising of 1916, the Irish War of Independence was fought between 1919 and 1921, which was closely followed by the eleven-month Irish Civil War from 1922 to 1923 and the declaration of the Irish Free State on 6 December 1922. Therefore, at the same time as the new nation state of Ireland was forming its identity, jazz had arrived and was developing both sonically and conceptually.

## **2.2 Black Music, Minstrelsy and Blackface in Ireland**

Like many other European countries, Ireland’s first meeting with American and black American music came through touring minstrel shows. The connections between ‘minstrelsy’, ‘ragtime’, and ‘jazz’ are often downplayed. Howard Rye argues in the *Black Music Research Journal* that their connections are traceable to ‘the comings and goings of performers on the music-hall circuits throughout Europe’.<sup>6</sup> According to Douglas C. Riach, the appearance of blackface minstrel shows in Ireland dates from at least 1836, with at least fifteen groups appearing before the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861.<sup>7</sup> The first of these, Thomas Dartmouth Rice, enjoyed great success in Dublin and Cork.<sup>8</sup> Christy’s Minstrels had been visiting Britain since the 1840s, and visited Dublin yearly from 1859 through to 1868.<sup>9</sup> The Southern Troupe of Sable Harmonists was a ‘Negro troupe’ and not a blackface act, and appeared in 1852 at the Music Hall, Lower Abbey Street (later known as the Metropolitan Hall).<sup>10</sup> Less than a decade later, in 1861, blackface minstrel shows performed by Irish players were taking place, with concern shown by the critics about the ‘good taste’ of these newer minstrel

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6 Rye, Howard: ‘The Southern Syncopated Orchestra’, *Black Music Research Journal*, 29, (2009), 153.

7 Riach, Douglas C.: ‘Blacks and Blackface on the Irish Stage, 1830–60’, *Journal of American Studies*, 7, (1973), 231. Scott DeVeaux and Gary Giddons claim in their book *Jazz* that Minstrelsy was created in 1843. Giddons, Gary and DeVeaux, Scott Knowles: *Jazz*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009).

8 Riach, 231.

9 Parsonage, Catherine: *The Evolution of Jazz in Britain, 1880–1935*, (Aldershot, Hampshire, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 5; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 24 November 1859, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 6 January 1960, 2; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 19 January 1861, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 15 January 1862, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 2 November 1863, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 31 October 1864, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 1 September 1865, 2; ‘The Christy’s Minstrels at the Exhibition Palace’, *Irish Times*, 2 October 1866, 3; ‘Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 3 September 1867, 3; ‘The Christy’s Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 2 November 1868, 3.

10 Riach, 233.



shows.<sup>11</sup> Dublin was visited by ‘real African tribesmen’ on at least two occasions: in 1847 by the Bosjesmen from, ‘it was claimed’, South Africa; and later by the ‘Aztec Lilliputians’, again ‘declared to be’ from South Africa.<sup>12</sup> It is of interest to note the early significance of authenticity in the reception of African music: in this case, the writer highlighting that the music was from ‘real African tribesmen’, with the added caveat that the musicians were only ‘claimed’ and ‘declared to be’ authentically African, as opposed to ‘inauthentic’ blackface minstrelsy.

Earlier still, the black actor Ira Aldridge was a frequent visitor to Dublin (from 1829 to 1840), impressing critics with renditions from *Othello* to minstrel songs. According to Riach, he gained support from the Archbishop of Tuam and was made a Brother Mason of the Grand Lodge of Ireland; however, he also faced hostility and frustration.<sup>13</sup>

The Fisk Jubilee Singers was the name given to a group of black singers from Fisk University in Nashville, the first university in America to offer education to ‘young men and women irrespective of color’.<sup>14</sup> While the tradition of having a vocal ensemble consisting of students still continues, the group was originally formed in order to earn money for the university. They first performed in America in 1871 and toured Europe for the first time in 1873. The Fisk Jubilee Singers was not a minstrel group and its repertoire consisted mostly of hymns and spirituals. According to Fisk University archivist, Andrea Jackson, the group’s repertoire helped to ensure that ‘slave songs’ or spirituals, which were disappearing with the emancipation of slaves, became part of the world’s musical heritage.<sup>15</sup> The Fisk Jubilee Singers performed in Dublin on 24 and 28 November and on 13 and 14 December 1876, as well as playing throughout Ireland from October through December of that year.<sup>16</sup> Black minstrel troupes popular in Britain such as Hague’s and Haverley’s also visited Ireland as part of their tours.<sup>17</sup>

While there was a presence of black performers in Ireland, the majority of portrayals of Africans and African Americans was in the form of blackface minstrelsy, which

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 238–240.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Fisk Jubilee Singers—Our History’, <[http://www.fiskjubileesingers.org/our\\_history.html](http://www.fiskjubileesingers.org/our_history.html)> [Accessed 21 November 2014].

<sup>15</sup> It is possible that the group visited Ireland on an earlier tour. See: Jackson, Andrea: *A Guide to the Jubilee Singers European Tour Collection, 1873–1878*, Fisk University Archives, (2004), 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Parsonage, 5; ‘Hague’s Minstrels – “The Slave Troupe”’, *Irish Times*, 2 Jan 1878, 5; ‘Haverley’s Genuine Coloured Minstrels’, *Irish Times*, 26 April 1882, 7.

depicted ‘the Negro as a figure of fun’ while also ‘a rather pitiable figure who was miserably unhappy as a slave’.<sup>18</sup> Riach notes that although there was a strong Irish abolitionist movement that objected to the racist stereotyping of blacks, they were largely silent concerning blackface minstrel shows, and their failure to condemn this inaccurate portrayal contributed to it taking hold in the minds of countless Irish emigrants as the accepted understanding of the black American.<sup>19</sup> Catherine Parsonage notes that minstrel shows in Britain appealed to both the ‘philanthropic upper class as to the empathetic lower class’ in that they could be considered by Victorian philanthropists to be a source of musical education. The combination of philanthropic interest with abolitionist concern and curiosity regarding the life and culture of the African ‘other’ ensured the ongoing success of the minstrel show.<sup>20</sup>

Minstrel shows continued well into the twentieth century; an edition of the *Irish Times* from 1962 advertised a minstrel show in the Olympia Theatre, Dublin, while *The Black and White Minstrel Show* had its last broadcast on BBC television in 1978.<sup>21</sup> While the BBC, being a British channel, was inaccessible to much of the Irish population, many in Dublin were able to receive it, and it was included in the television listings in the *Irish Times*.

### 2.3 The Early Dublin Jazz Scene

In September 1963, in what appears to be the first column written about the Dublin jazz scene in the *Irish Times*, George Desmond ‘Hoddy’ Hodnett argues for the existence of a jazz scene in Dublin ‘on and off’ since 1921.<sup>22</sup> Hodnett (1918-1990) was a composer, trumpeter, and jazz pianist.<sup>23</sup> He appeared on the first edition of *The Late Late Show* in 1962 as a guest and, according to reports, ‘brought a splendid touch of almost baroque eccentricity’ and ‘played extremely good quiet jazz with enormous sang froid’.<sup>24</sup> Hodnett wrote the song ‘Monto’, made famous by The Dubliners, and lived a colourful,

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<sup>18</sup> Riach, 240.

<sup>19</sup> Riach, 240; cited in Hogan, Eileen: “‘Earthly, sensual, devilish’: Sex, “race” and jazz in post-independence Ireland’, *Jazz Research Journal*, 4, (2010), 64

<<http://www.equinoxjournals.com/JAZZ/article/view/10486>> [Accessed 1 March 2014].

<sup>20</sup> Parsonage, 9.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Minstrel Show’, *Irish Times*, 15 March 1962, 9. The BBC stands for British Broadcasting Corporation.

<sup>22</sup> Hodnett, George: ‘Jazz: Setting the scene’, *Irish Times*, 18 September 1963, 8. Al Moore had a series of columns called ‘Needlepoint’ wherein he reviewed albums, including jazz, from 1955–1957.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Death of Jazz Critic, George D. Hodnett’, *Irish Times*, 24 September 1990, 2.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Very late last Friday night...’, *RTÉ Guide*, 13 July 1962, 3.

bohemian life.<sup>25</sup> His largest contribution to jazz, however, may have been his regular contributions as jazz critic to the *Irish Times* for almost thirty years.

Hodnett cites the beginning of the Dublin jazz scene as the arrival of the Southern Syncopators' Orchestra [sic], who played a two week residency from 17 October 1921 in La Scala Theatre (later the Capitol), Dublin.<sup>26</sup> More commonly known as the Southern Syncopated Orchestra, this performance came only eight days after the death of eight of its members, in an accident that involved the ship on which they were travelling, the *S.S. Rowan*, being struck first by the *West Camak* and then by the *Clan Malcolm* off Wigtownshire.<sup>27</sup> The Southern Syncopated Orchestra occupies an important place in early jazz history, not least for being the group that brought New Orleans clarinettist Sidney Bechet to Europe.<sup>28</sup> An ever-changing orchestra, it played a mixture of jazz, ragtime, spirituals, minstrelsy, and light classical music.<sup>29</sup> After the sinking of the ship bringing them to Dublin, many members of the orchestra found themselves without money, clothes, or instruments. Two benefit concerts were held in Glasgow, with musicians who were in Glasgow at the time performing with those from the orchestra well enough to appear.<sup>30</sup>

The Southern Syncopated Orchestra is an example of all three 'styles' of music being performed by the same ensemble; however, they were not the first African American ensemble to tour Ireland in the early twentieth century. Even before the ill-fated orchestra's trip to Dublin in 1921, black drummer Louis Mitchell had toured British and Irish music halls from April to November 1917 (see Figure 1), later in his career billing himself as 'The first man to bring jazz to Britain'.<sup>31</sup>

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25 'Death of Jazz Critic, George D. Hodnett', 2.

26 Hodnett, George, 8.

27 Rye, Howard: 'Chronology of the Southern Syncopated Orchestra: 1919–1922', *Black Music Research Journal*, 30, (2010), 15.

28 The Orchestra was billed in Dublin as 'Minstrel Band Performance of Syncopated Orchestra', Dublin Evening Telegraph, 18 October 1921, 2, cited in Rye, 'Chronology of the Southern Syncopated Orchestra: 1919–1922', 15.

29 Rye, 'The Southern Syncopated Orchestra', 153.

30 *Ibid.*, 212.

31 Theatre-Royal (Dublin, Ireland): Louis A. Mitchell presents the 7 Spades, 1917 <http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000515772> [Accessed 18 May 2015]; Rye, 'The Southern Syncopated Orchestra', 154.



Figure 1: Theatre Royal Hippodrome Poster featuring Louis A. Mitchell, (David Allen & Sons), 1917

## 2.4 Jazz Performance in Dublin 1919-1934

Hodnett summarises jazz performance in Dublin from 1921 up to 1934 as happening ‘when a dance-band chose to play some’, and notes that musicians sometimes ‘held a jam session (though it wasn’t yet called that) for their own amusement’.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the newspapers of this period have many articles on various bands advertised to play at jazz dances. Evidence of jazz arriving in the public consciousness is shown in the *Irish*

<sup>32</sup> Hodnett, George, 8.

*Independent* as early as February 1919, in which there was advertisement for *Ideas* magazine, which offered ‘Word [sic] and Music Free of the Great Popular Song “JAZZ”’.<sup>33</sup>

The first written record of a jazz group playing in Ireland and reported as such may have been ‘Mr. Gordon’s “Jazz Band” of 5 U.S.A. Naval men in uniform’.<sup>34</sup> The *Irish Independent* of 15 February 1919 reported that they were the ‘principle attraction’ at the ‘Zoo Ball’ held the previous night in the Royal College of Surgeons.<sup>35</sup> In attendance in uniform were ‘many officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force’.<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to note that while British and American officers enjoyed dancing and jazz music, the first Dáil had been formed only twenty-four days previously.<sup>37</sup> Of further relevance to Dublin musical history is that ‘every alternative dance’ was played by Mr John Clarke-Barry’s band.<sup>38</sup> Mr Clarke-Barry was involved in a headline-grabbing licensing case later that year, in which he declared that he ‘did not provide jazz in the vulgar sense’, adding that: ‘The distortions introduced by the coloured members make the music vulgar. Exaggerated jazz music by nigger musicians is most decidedly suggestive and indecent.’<sup>39</sup> A retired cadet and captain from the British army were applying for a licence for music and dancing at 35 Dawson Street, to which two ratepayers and the Vigilance Association has opposed. Mr. McLoone, KC stated that in addition to the applicants, two members of the band also served in the war ‘and the fact that these people fought in the war might account for the bitter opposition to the application’.<sup>40</sup> The newspaper article also states that the band ‘had two coloured men brought from London’ and that the band was already playing in the Café Cairo.<sup>41</sup> The Café Cairo was located at 59 Grafton Street and the name the ‘Cairo Gang’ was retrospectively given to a group of eleven British Intelligence Officers who were killed by the IRA on the morning of 21 November 1920 as part of the events of Bloody Sunday.<sup>42</sup> The

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33 ‘Ideas Advertisement’, *Irish Independent*, 4 February 1919, 4.

34 ‘The “Jazz Band” at the Zoo Ball’, *Irish Independent*, 15 February 1919, 6.

35 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.*

37 The December 1918 election resulted in a landslide victory for the Irish republican party Sinn Féin, whose MPs deliberately abstained from taking their seats in British Parliament. Subsequently, they formed the first Dáil and declared independence from Britain on the 21 January 1919. The War of Independence would not escalate until later that year.

38 John Clarke-Barry was the father of Billie Barry who went on to found the Billie Barry Stage School, which is still in existence.

39 ‘Is the Jazz Immoral?’, *Freemans Journal*, 25 November 1919, 3.

40 ‘Is the Jazz Immoral?’, *Irish Independent*, 25 November 1919, 5.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Cottrell, Peter: *The Anglo-Irish War. The Troubles of 1913-1922*, (Osprey Publishing, 2006), 53.



newspaper column inches given to the immorality of jazz on 25 November 1919, in which Mr Clarke-Barry's views appeared, are tempered by an article written the following day by a 'J.H.C.', who declares that 'the dreaded jazz' is really '[j]ust the one-step, danced double-quick to the same old music with the simple addition of pandemonium effects'.<sup>43</sup>

It was either good timing or opportunism that only four days after the controversy of the 'immoral jazz' in the *Irish Independent*, Mr Harry Foy of Church Street, Athlone, advertised 'Mr. Harry Foy's Jazz Quartette Band' in the *Connacht Tribune*.<sup>44</sup> The 1911 census reveals that one Henry Foy of Church Street, Athlone, was a professor of music, born in Westmeath. At the time of the census, Henry 'Harry' Foy was 30 and so would have been about 38 in 1919.<sup>45</sup> Foy's innovative musical efforts started before this time, as he also co-founded the Athlone Musical Society, Ireland's oldest musical society, in 1902 at around the age of 21.<sup>46</sup> This shows how quickly the concept of jazz was taken up, not just for dancers, but by musicians, as well. Further early jazz performances in Dublin are recorded in the newsprint of the day, and include the Cocktail Syncopators at the Theatre Royal 'introducing Singing and Dancing, and their Famous Jazz Band' on 1 May 1923, the 'Famous Dixie Minstrels (Come and hear their Jazbos Band)', in the Tivoli Theatre in 1925, and 'Noni and his famous jazz band, the Golden Serenaders' at the Theatre Royal in 1927.<sup>47</sup>

## 2.5 Reception of Early Jazz 1919-1934

The extent of academic interest in early jazz performance in Ireland contrasts with the wealth of research concerning, for example, early jazz in Britain.<sup>48</sup> Academic writing about pre-1960s Irish jazz has been more concerned with the efforts made by the Irish state and the Catholic Church to contain the perceived threat posed by this foreign music, and to maintain cultural control over the new state coming into more contact with outside forces. Ireland, like many countries dealing with an emerging nationalism,

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43 J.H.C.: 'To-day & Yesterday', *Irish Independent*, 26 November 1919, 4.

44 'Mr Harry Foy's Jazz Quartette Band', *Connacht Tribune*, 29 November 1919, 8.

45 *Ibid.*

46 'Westmeath Independent—Pages from the Past', *Westmeath Independent*,

<<http://www.westmeathindependent.ie/news/roundup/articles/2012/02/29/4009279-pages-from-the-past>> [Accessed 23 February 2015].

47 'Theatre Royal Advertisement Cocktail Syncopators', *Irish Times*, 1 May 1923, 4; 'Dixie Minstrels', *Irish Independent*, 4 March 1925, 10; 'Public Amusements', *Irish Times*, 11 March 1927, 6.

48 Examples of books on the history of jazz in Britain include Godbolt, Jim: *A History of Jazz in Britain, 1919–50*, (London; New York: Quartet Books, 1984); Godbolt, Jim: *A History of Jazz in Britain, 1950–70*, (London; New York: Quartet Books, 1989); Parsonage.

tended toward economic and cultural insularity in the decades following independence.<sup>49</sup>

Published accounts concerning jazz and Irish culture include Eileen Hogan's "'Earthly, sensual, devilish": Sex, "race" and jazz in post-independence Ireland' from the *Jazz Research Journal* (2010), which addresses the creation of a national identity in post-independence Ireland through the racialisation and sexualisation of jazz music and dancing. The article draws on newspaper accounts and parliamentary debate to explore the role of the Catholic Church/state alliance in strongly influencing cultural activities.<sup>50</sup> In addition, Barbara O'Connor discusses the 1930s dance hall space as a site 'in which national and gendered forms of embodied identities were constructed and mediated', while Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin examines the effect of the Public Dance Halls Act of 1935 on rural communities and their musical culture.<sup>51</sup>

Jazz as a construct in early twentieth century Ireland enveloped both music and dance. To be more specific, in terms of dance, most reports claim that jazz was used to describe all forms of 'modern' dance. Barbara O'Connor points out that confusion was prevalent in both newspaper coverage and among the public at large concerning the meaning of the term jazz-dancing (and therefore jazz, which was often used to describe dancing without the dancing suffix). Although difference could be maintained between 'modern' dance (ballroom) and 'foreign' dance (jazz), 'whether it was a jazz foxtrot or quickstep was not at issue, the main point of contention being that it involved closed couple dancing (as did ballroom) thereby allowing closer physical contact than céilí dance where minimal body contact was the norm'.<sup>52</sup>

The debate, as it played out in the Dáil records, also combined music and dance into one entity when it concerned jazz. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, in 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell' for the *New Hibernia Review* (2005), states that 'jazz' referred generically to all

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49 Ryan, Joseph: 'Music in independent Ireland since 1921', in *A New History of Ireland*, ed. Art Cosgrove (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1976), 627.

50 Hogan. See also: Duffy, Johannah: 'Jazz, Identity and Sexuality in Ireland during the Interwar Years', *Irish Journal of American Studies Online*, (2009) <<http://ijas.iaas.ie/index.php/jazz-identity-and-sexuality-in-ireland-during-the-interwar-years/>> [Accessed 5 April 2014].

51 O'Connor, Barbara: 'Sexing the Nation: Discourses of the Dancing Body in Ireland in the 1930s', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 14, (2005), 100. Ó hAllmhuráin, Gearóid: 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935', *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 9, (2005), 10.

52 O'Connor, Barbara, 90 (fn 3).

type of modern *dance*, as does Hogan, but it is clear from Ó hAllmhuráin's example that the dance and the music go hand in hand.<sup>53</sup>

Modern dancing, generically referred to as "jazz" in Ireland at the time, had been introduced by commercial recordings and returning immigrants during the wild years of the Roaring Twenties, and mirrored the changing social mores of the country at a time when American popular culture was steadily selling its way across the Atlantic. Its snazzy menu of fox-trots, two-steps, and shimmy shakes—not to mention "the sensual moan of the saxophone" and the loose morals of flappers in high heels—all became prime targets in the pulpit beating sermons of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>54</sup>

Eileen Hogan has shown numerous examples of racialized and sexualised constructions of jazz in national and regional print media that demonstrate that, just as in America, jazz was inseparable from issues of race from its first appearance in Ireland. Hogan is insightful and accurate when she states: 'The idea of 'jazz'—associated with sexual impropriety, 'paganism' and racial impurity—was an ideal construct against which to compare the sanctitude of traditional Irish, Catholic and rural values.'<sup>55</sup> The sites for the exercising of power on the Irish people were the broadcasting service and the dance halls.

Hogan argues that the construction of the Irish identity, 'similar to many emergent postcolonial, national cultures, involved a fixing of "Irishness" to rural values'.<sup>56</sup> In addition to the lowering of moral values, jazz was feared for its ability to awaken 'primitive' qualities as demonstrated in a contribution to the *Irish Radio Review* in 1927:

I know that my feet will begin to tap the floor if I hear a Jazz-band strike up a tune. I know that the natural instinct is for me to move my body in all sorts of ridiculous ways that my ancestors discarded years ago... But I ask, is that all that Jazz can do? Can it not wake other than animal instincts in me? Has it not other than 'nigger' qualities? I, for one, do not want to ape the nigger. I wonder if all those who profess to go into an ecstasy when they hear the haunting strains of the 'Hoola-Hoola-Blues', or such-like clap-trap, know that it is nothing short of a

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<sup>53</sup> Hogan, 72.

<sup>54</sup> Ó hAllmhuráin, 10; For more explanation of the names given to dancing styles see Shanagher, Sean: 'Recreational dance in Ireland 1940–1960: politics and pleasures', Ph.D. diss., (Dublin City University, 2014), 1–2 <<http://doras.dcu.ie/19758/>> [Accessed 30 October 2014].

<sup>55</sup> Hogan, 76.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.



reversal to the primitive, when they allow themselves to be carried away by such arrant nonsense.<sup>57</sup>

It is possible that ‘AZ’ was referring to the ‘Hula Blues’, written in 1919 by John Avery Noble with words by Sonny Cunha.<sup>58</sup> The lyrics may have formed part of the writer’s objection:

Oh, oh, oh those loving Hula Blues  
Tell me have you heard those loving Hula Blues  
You can’t imagine what you’re feeling blue about  
You simply glide and take a slide and  
You want to shout  
You wiggle, you giggle,  
You wiggle to the Hula Blues<sup>59</sup>

Hogan gives many examples of the racialized construction of jazz from newspaper accounts and government debates of 1920–1938, and it is worth repeating some of them here. In September 1921, the *Irish Times* reported that the foxtrot ‘with its various negroid excrescences, is not only inartistic, but inane’ and that jazz ‘has an appeal for those primitive passions which Freud declares to be the prevailing factor in the subconscious mind’.<sup>60</sup> Six months later, the same paper wrote that the ‘negroid influence in the present craze is very harmful’ and that ‘until modern dancing divorces itself from that barbaric influence it will be unable to claim its followers as lovers of the art alone’.<sup>61</sup> Hogan goes on to give more examples from this period from other papers, including the *Anglo-Celt*, the *Limerick Leader*, and the *Irish Independent*.<sup>62</sup>

## 2.6 Jazz on the Airwaves

The 1926 Wireless Telegraphy Act allowed for the establishment of 2RN, Ireland’s first radio broadcast station, which initially had only a limited broadcast range. Despite this, broadcasting historian Maurice Gorham reports that even the earliest broadcasts were

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57 AZ, ‘The Listening Post’, *Irish Radio Review* 3 (1), October 1927. Cited in Duffy, Johannah, ‘Jazz, Identity and Sexuality in Ireland during the Interwar Years’, *Irish Journal of American Studies Online*, (2009).

58 Ejiri, Masakazu: ‘The Development of Waikiki, 1900–1949: the formative period of an American resort paradise’, (1996), 197 <<http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/9303>> [Accessed 11 November 2014].

59 Muir, Peter C.: *Long Lost Blues: Popular Blues in America, 1850–1920*, (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 47.

60 *Irish Times*, (5 September 1921), cited in Hogan, 66.

61 *Irish Times*, (16 March 1922), cited in Hogan, 65.

62 *Ibid.*

often able to be listened to ‘more than one hundred miles from Dublin’.<sup>63</sup> The broadcast coverage was extended by the establishment of 6CK in Cork in 1927, as a relay station and occasional generator of additional programming. With the erection of a new transmitter in Athlone in 1933, a clear signal was achieved nationwide.<sup>64</sup> The station changed its name to Radio Éireann (RÉ) in 1938 and ‘propagated the cultural nationalism of Fianna Fáil who favoured the nurturing of a hegemonic Gaelic, Catholic state’.<sup>65</sup>

The first mention of jazz in the parliamentary debates comes from 1926 when the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Mr James Joseph Walsh, spoke about responses to requests for comments regarding their programming:

Thirty replies were received. Fifty per cent of these expressed satisfaction, but made some slight suggestions, and the other 15 replies may be included under the category of the dissatisfied—some because we had too much Irish, and some because we had too little Irish, and too much English; some because we taught German; some because we had not enough of jazz, and some because we had too much jazz; and so on.<sup>66</sup>

Sponsored broadcasts were a great source of income for the fledgling industry and advertisers were keen to increase listenership both in Ireland and abroad, after the new broadcasting tower was built, and jazz music, as it was understood at the time, proved to be popular.

Cathal Brennan reports that the first programme sponsored by an advertiser was broadcast on 31 December 1927. He also states that 2RN could ‘be received throughout Western Europe and the sponsored programmes picked up a significant following outside Ireland’.<sup>67</sup> Gorham also reports that the earliest Irish broadcasts were able to be picked up in Great Britain.<sup>68</sup> Those interested in the promotion of ‘national’ music and concerned about the ‘class’ of music and culture being propagated through the airwaves

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63 Gorham, Maurice: *Forty Years of Irish Broadcasting*, (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1967), 39.

64 ‘Athlone Station and Transmitter Officially Opened’, <<http://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/681-history-of-rte/683-rte-1930s/290028-rte-radios-athlone-station-and-transmitter-officially-opened-6-february-1933/>> [Accessed 15 November 2014].

65 Dooley, Gerard: ‘Entertainment in independent Ireland: Evolution of Irish parochial versus commercial dance hall culture’, *History Studies*, 13, (2012).

66 Dáil Éireann—Wireless Telegraphy Bill—Second Stage, 30 November 1926 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1926/11/30/00022.asp#N38>> [Accessed 15 November 2014].

67 Brennan, Cathal: ‘The Anti-Jazz Campaign | The Irish Story’, (2011), 61 <<http://www.theirishstory.com/2011/07/01/the-anti-jazz-campaign/#.Uzm2661dWYZ>> [Accessed 31 March 2014].

68 Gorham, 35.

feared the fact that the companies paying for the sponsored programmes were free to play what music they chose, and most chose not to use live musicians but to use gramophone recordings of popular music.<sup>69</sup>

A debate over the 10 and 11 May 1928 demonstrated the confusion surrounding jazz at the time. Mr Thomas Mullins, TD for Cork-West, argued that the programmes on 2RN, in contrast with English stations Daventry and London, which could sometimes be received in Ireland, were ‘too classical, in other words, too high-brow’, and that ‘[w]ireless, after all, is an amusement’. He proposed that a solution could be found in ‘programmes for the plain people of a little bit more of a jazzy nature, if I may describe it so’.<sup>70</sup> The following day, TD for Waterford Mr Seán Goulding put himself forward as someone who knew what jazz really was, and differentiated it from dance music and light music. Goulding felt that Mullins ‘did not mean actual jazz music’ and would be ‘sorry to see relayed the sort of jazz stuff given out from London. It is not music at all. It is simply noise.’ He disagreed on the use of English stations as models for programming and forwarded that the German stations played ‘much better dance music and light music generally’. Goulding’s concern appears not to be the promotion of national values but with a sense of class or status, and he states, ‘I hope that we are not going to be afflicted in the future with more of that class of music that sometimes the Daventry station sends out’, and that Daventry had to cater for ‘dancing crowds, and the result is that sometimes we are afflicted with a share of that class of stuff’.<sup>71</sup>

## 2.7 The Anti-Jazz Movement

The Irish anti-jazz movement has been examined by Hogan and others as well as being the subject of two radio documentaries and numerous blog posts.<sup>72</sup> For the political elite of the newly established Irish Free State, jazz was not a neutral form of ‘foreign’ music but a threat to the new nation state as demonstrated in the media and Dáil records. The mediation of jazz music has always provided individuals and groups with ways to

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69 Mullaney-Dignam, Karol Anne: ‘State, Nation and Music in Independent Ireland, 1922-51’, Ph.D. diss., (National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2008), 249.

70 Dáil Éireann—In Committee On Finance. Vote No. 63—Wireless Broadcasting., 10 May 1928 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1928/05/10/00019.asp>> [Accessed 15 November 2014].

71 Dáil Éireann—Vote No. 63—Wireless Broadcasting, Resumed., 11 May 1928 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1928/05/11/00004.asp>> [Accessed 5 April 2014].

72 Research into the anti-jazz movement includes: Duffy; Smyth, Jim: ‘Dancing, Depravity and All That Jazz: The Public Dance Halls Act of 1935’, *History Ireland*, 1, (1993); Brennan, Cathal; Mullaney-Dignam, 185–190; Sheehy, Kieran: ‘Down with jazz: Anti-jazz campaign of the 1930s’, RTE.ie, (1987) <<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/doconone/jazz.html>> [Accessed 4 April 2014], Fitzsimons, Ruth: ‘Out with Paganism and all that Jazz’, *The Lyric Feature*, (2013) <<http://presspack.rte.ie/2012/12/07/the-lyric-feature-out-with-paganism-and-all-that-jazz/>> [Accessed 5 September 2016].

identify with particular values and ideologies. For the Catholic Church and its supporters throughout government, jazz stood in opposition to a developing national identity that valued social morality as the bedrock of the new state. In particular, jazz was feared for its potential in the ‘liberalization of sexual mores’ particularly in regards to young Irish women, ‘whose cultural activities became a key concern of the guardians of public morality in the new nation-state in the 1920s and 1930s’.<sup>73</sup>

These fears led the way for an article on 2 December 1933 in the journal of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) *An Cárán*.<sup>74</sup> It announced the launch of the anti-jazz campaign conducted by the Gaelic League, with support from the Catholic Church and many prominent public figures.<sup>75</sup> At the County Committee meeting of the Gaelic League in Longford, the Reverend Peter Conefrey, parish priest of Cloone, told those assembled: ‘It is up to those who are interested in the life of the nation to-day to make a strong public effort to save the life of the nation, menaced by this Pagan Jazz.’<sup>76</sup> In what constitutes a press release, the article continued: ‘If the people understood the meaning of Jazz they would not take part in it. It was borrowed from the African savages by the anti-God movement, with the object of destroying morals and religion.’<sup>77</sup> The author suggests that ‘jazz’ bands were regularly engaged to provide music for dances throughout the country, singling out the annual dances of the ‘Civic Guards and Civil Servants’ stating: ‘They could, for instance, have a good Irish dance band in the Garda depot, available for all their functions throughout the country, to replace Jazz bands.’<sup>78</sup>

On New Year’s Day, 1934, over 3,000 people marched, accompanied by five bands and banners, proclaiming ‘Down with Jazz’ and ‘Out with Paganism’. A public meeting was held following the march, where messages of support were read out from well-known personalities, such as the President, Éamon de Valera, Douglas Hyde, and also from high-profile members of the clergy including Cardinal MacRory, and the Bishop of Armagh and Clonmacnoise, Dr McNamee. Father Conefrey declared that jazz was ‘a

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<sup>73</sup> Hogan, 57.

<sup>74</sup> The GAA was created in 1884 to promote Irish sports and culture. ‘An Camán—Editorial’, *An Camán*, 6 January 1934, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Hogan, 57.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> ‘National campaign against jazz’, *An Camán*, 2 December 1933, 6.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

greater danger to the Irish people than drunkenness and landlordism and concerted action by church and state was required'.<sup>79</sup>

A few days later, Seán Óg Ó Ceallaigh, Secretary of the Gaelic League, was reported to have launched an attack on the Minister for Finance, Seán MacEntee, when he stated:

Our minister for Finance has a soul buried in jazz and is selling the musical soul of the nation for the dividends of sponsored jazz programmes. He is jazzing every night of the week.<sup>80</sup>

Not long after that, when Seán Óg Ó Ceallaigh was scheduled to deliver a lecture entitled 'Irish Culture: Its Decline' on 11 January 1934 on 2RN, the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Gerald Boland, intervened to prevent him from delivering a similar attack on the Minister for Finance. However, Boland reassured the public that the amount of jazz broadcast would be curtailed and replaced with classical music and military marches, and that the station would give up the revenue that sponsored shows brought in rather than have them 'serve to advance jazz'.<sup>81</sup>

Importantly, the campaign was not a one-off event but a concerted series of efforts to both rid the airwaves of imported music and to promote 'Irish virtues' through appropriate cultural activities, such as céilís and Irish dancing. On 20 January 1934 the *Leitrim Observer* continued its coverage of the anti-jazz campaign by carrying an opinion piece written under the pen name 'Lia Fáil and fellow Gaels', which stated:

Let the wagon Saxon be told that we Irish Catholics do not want and will not have the dances and the music that he has borrowed from the savages of the islands of the Pacific. Let him keep them for the 30 million pagans he has at home.<sup>82</sup>

It continued in a warning not to 'disgrace the heroic saints and martyrs of our race... The West, we are sure, will not now slumber but rush forth again to expel the last and worst invader – the jazz of Johnny Bull and the niggers and cannibals.'<sup>83</sup> Johnny Bull is, of course, a reference to John Bull, used as a propaganda figure both for and against Britain and specifically England. Bringing anti-English sentiment into the argument

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<sup>79</sup> Brennan, Cathal, 'The Anti-Jazz Campaign'.

<sup>80</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 6 January 1934, 3 as cited in Brennan, 'The Anti-Jazz Campaign'.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 20 January 1934, 3 as cited in Brennan, 'The Anti-Jazz Campaign'.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

against jazz strengthened the moral stand of the Gaelic League against all things foreign, represented in the case by Britain.

In February 1934, Father Conefrey chaired the meeting of the South Leitrim Executive of the Gaelic League and the question ‘What is jazz?’ was on the agenda. The answer was given as ‘something that should not as much be mentioned among us and is borrowed from the language of the savages of Africa and its object is to destroy virtue in the human soul’.<sup>84</sup> Conefrey even went so far as to accuse those responsible for the upkeep of the law, the Gardaí, as being amongst the main offenders in holding all-night jazz dances, and called for céilís to be introduced in their place. However, while the Gardaí may have been embracing cultural imports, the political establishment was following a more conservative path.

## **2.8 Anti-Jazz Sentiment in the Dáil**

Following the bringing of jazz to the forefront of the national media by the anti-jazz campaign, the question ‘What is jazz?’ was now being asked ‘in every paper for the past three weeks’, according to the *Connacht Tribune*, while one TD, a Mr Kehoe, defined jazz as ‘a cross between a waltz and all-in wrestling’.<sup>85</sup>

While jazz and modern music could symbolise a lower social standing, the ‘cult of the picture house and cult of the jazz shop’ was also blamed by Thomas Kelly TD, for contributing to a change in disposition of the people in a ‘very considerable and in a not very pleasant way’. He cited the ‘many hundreds of our people, I know, idle’ and ‘idle for a long time’, due to changes ‘such as jazz music’.

We hear this jazz music very often in going through the streets at night, issuing from dance halls. It is a remarkable sort of music even to my unmusical ear. I could not make head nor tail of it. In my opinion, there is nothing in it. How people can stand hours and hours waltzing around a room to that type of music I do not know.<sup>86</sup>

In the aftermath of the anti-jazz march of 1934, jazz was being summoned as an insult by all sides. The attack on the Minister for Finance, Seán MacEntee, by the Secretary of

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Connacht Tribune*, 10 February 1934, 7, cited in Hogan, 67; Parliamentary Debates, 26 March 1936 <<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail1936032600026#N26>> [Accessed 5 April 2014]. A TD is a member of Dáil Éireann, the lower house of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament). The full term is Teachta Dála, which means Deputy to the Dáil.

<sup>86</sup> Dáil Éireann—Questions, 5 April 1933 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1933/04/05/printall.asp>> [Accessed 21 March 2014].

the Gaelic League, Seán Óg Ó Ceallaigh, during the march in January 1934 had not been forgotten. The TD for the National University of Ireland, Mr Patrick McGilligan used it to taunt MacEntee in a debate on 16 May 1934: ‘I am sorry the Minister for Finance was not there if it was a jazz dance. He is generally reported as a jazz artist.’ He reminded MacEntee that he had been reported as ‘the jazz artist of his Party’ and continued:

I do not think the term is deserved—certainly not the artist part of it—but I am sure that in his various financial perambulations he has often syncopated his steps to a tune known as: “Have you ever seen a dream walking?” Some of those sentimental song-dreams have a habit of becoming nightmares after a bit.<sup>87</sup>

MacEntee did not attempt to use the opportunity to show his support for jazz music but instead turned the label of jazz back onto his attackers, ensuring his reply referenced more highbrow musical connotations such as prelude and overture:

Appropriately enough, after making that observation, the Deputy proceeded to ask the question: “Did you ever see a dream walking?” I say, appropriately enough, because the Deputy has a jazz mind, and it is appropriate that a jazz tune should occur to it as being the most fitting prelude or overture to the grand attack which he was going to launch.<sup>88</sup>

With the influence of pressure groups ensuring jazz’s negative connotations, the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in 1935, Gerald Boland, stated that while he preferred not to listen to jazz, ‘I listen-in as a sort of duty since I took over responsibility for the station’. He added that it ‘strikes me as a non-musical man that the jazz music appears to be quite the same; it all seems to me to be the same, or very much alike’.<sup>89</sup> Jazz was not the only music being criticised as the Minister attempted to defend the programming decisions of the newly fledged industry.

It is only natural that there is bound to be some sameness especially when it is dance music. I like the traditional music when it is well played, but it gives me a pain when it is not well played.<sup>90</sup>

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87 Dáil Éireann—Galway Harbour Bill, 1933. Financial Resolutions, 16 May 1934 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1934/05/16/00010.asp#N251>> [Accessed 15 November 2014].

88 *Ibid.*

89 Dáil Éireann—Questions, 15 May 1935 <<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/1935/05/15/printall.asp>> [Accessed 21 March 2014].

90 *Ibid.*



The derogatory use of the term ‘jazz’ continued in the same debate when Deputy Richard Corish stated his dismay at the ‘ridicule’ of the national anthem being played at the tempo of ‘something like that of jazz music. It is an insult to the national anthem and to the country to play it under such conditions and if it is not played properly, I should like to see it withdrawn.’<sup>91</sup> It is not of interest to this study whether politicians of the 1930s enjoyed listening to jazz or not, but how jazz as a construct, with its negative connotations, was used by social agents to position themselves politically. At this level, jazz was often far removed from musical elements and existed as a representation of ideals and values.<sup>92</sup>

## **2.9 The Dance Halls Act of 1935**

Early indications of the conservatism of the new Irish Free State had been seen in 1923 with the Censorship of Films Act. In 1926, the committee on ‘evil literature’ was appointed to review censorship laws, resulting in the establishment of the Censorship of Publications Board and Censorship of Publications Act in 1929, in order to provide for the prohibition of ‘the sale and distribution of unwholesome literature’. Furthermore, the Censorship of Films Act 1923 was extended to include ‘vocal or other sounds’ accompanying pictures.<sup>93</sup>

Though the anti-jazz campaign fizzled out as 1934 went on, the pressure from the Gaelic League and the Catholic Church succeeded in persuading the Government to introduce the Dance Halls Act of 1935.<sup>94</sup> The act ensured that a license would be required for all public dancing, which could be acquired from a district judge by persons of good character. The Act was applied not just against ‘jazz’ dances but against many forms of public dance, fuelled by the enthusiasm of Catholic clergy who used it to keep their flock on the straight and narrow. According to Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, the Act had ‘dramatic consequences for music makers and dancers throughout rural Ireland in the 1930s’.<sup>95</sup> In time, the changes brought about by the act would shape the entire

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> The idea that a tempo could be ‘something like that of jazz music’ reminds me of when I worked in a restaurant as a busboy in Australia and the manager responded to my putting Miles Davis on the sound system by saying, ‘I don’t like jazz, it’s too high pitched’.

<sup>93</sup> Mullaney-Dignam, 184–185.

<sup>94</sup> O’Connor, Barbara, 91.

<sup>95</sup> Ó hAllmhuráin, 9–12. The Dance Halls Act of 1935 has continued to be used by the state, from curtailing unwanted public dancing such as illegal raves to forcing the instalment of CCTV in nightclubs. Any establishment that allows dancing on the premises is by law expected to obtain a license. See: Cans, Justin: ‘Ballroom of No Dance’, [www.rabble.ie](http://www.rabble.ie), (2013) <<http://www.rabble.ie/2013/02/18/ballroom-of-no-dance/>> [Accessed 26 September 2014]; Cassidy, Eddie: ‘Judge directs nightclub owners to install



popular music landscape of Ireland, including the evolution and reception of jazz performance.

A building boom in the 1930s saw a growth in the number of parish halls being built throughout the country. These halls provided a new central locus for communities, for a number of parish-related projects. They were also a location where dances could take place under the supervision of the clergy.<sup>96</sup> Before this, dances were generally held in private houses, or, in the case of crossroad dances, on a raised platform at a local crossroads. Like any change in environment, this had an effect on the musical aspect of the culture. The new geography of the dance hall promoted céilí bands over the solo, duo, or trio performances more common in the private home. As Ó hAllmhuráin puts it:

The traditions of rhythmic subtlety, appreciation for the skill of the music maker, and the informal chat between tunes ceded their place to rasping accordion, drum-kit antics, and greater separation between musicians and dancers. Likewise, older modal-based tunes were butchered by oblivious piano players, before disappearing forever into the black hole of fixed major and minor chords that were the stock-in-trade of convent-trained pianists.<sup>97</sup>

Additionally, the céilí band, which had gained in popularity in the 1920s, was well suited for the dance hall and became a key feature of Irish musical life, ‘dovetailing the modern tone of the saxophone and double bass with the traditional tone of flute and fiddle’.<sup>98</sup> Entrepreneurs saw an opportunity and began to build ballrooms that catered for modern dances beyond the reach of the parish priest, and in relative luxury when compared to the parish halls. Gerard Dooley maintains they were even built to accommodate jazz fans, continuing:

The divide between the parochial hall ethos and the dance hall ethos widened in the 1940s and 1950s. This was due to the proliferation of musical genres from America which were embraced in the ballrooms but resisted in the parochial hall.<sup>99</sup>

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CCTV’, *Irish Examiner*, 28 September 2002

<<http://www.irishexaminer.com/archives/2002/0928/ireland/judge-directs-nightclub-owners-to-install-cctv-562857861.html>> [Accessed 11 November 2014].

<sup>96</sup> Ó hAllmhuráin, 16.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Dooley, 56-57.

While the Dance Halls Act of 1935 provided the Government—and thus by proxy the Church—with spaces through which to exercise power on the populace, an equally important development was taking place, the wireless.

### 2.10 The Ban on Jazz

Although Ó hAllmhuráin states that jazz ‘was finally banned from the airwaves’ by the early 1940s, and Shanagher that it was banned on 2RN between 1935 and 1945 (citing RTÉ’s *Down With Jazz*), others, including Karol Anne Mullaney-Dignam and Joseph Ryan maintain that there was no official governmental ban on jazz.<sup>100</sup> Maurice Gorham, who served as Director of Broadcasting for seven years at RTÉ, also reports that although government ministers discouraged jazz in the 1940s, it was ‘not actually banned’.<sup>101</sup> Mullaney-Dignam—in the context of Germany’s Irish radio service, *Irland-Redaktion*—contends that the ‘cutting down’ of jazz was more of an attempt to ‘counteract the version of Irishness determinedly propagated by Nazi Germany’.<sup>102</sup> Ryan states that, in spring 1943, Radio Éireann ‘introduced a proscription’ on dance music that was more of a taboo than a ban.<sup>103</sup> The proscription on ‘modern music’ encompassed ‘swing, jive and hot jazz’. Also included in the prohibition was ‘any music with a vocal chorus sung by a “crooner”’.<sup>104</sup> P.J. Little, Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in 1943, discouraged the broadcasting of such music and the proscription allegedly stayed in place until 1948.<sup>105</sup>

While Mullaney-Dignam and Ryan both assert that there was no official ban, an *Irish Times* article from 27 July 1943, commenting on the report of Radio Éireann for the year of 1942, states that:

It is distressing, however, to find that both the Director of Broadcasting and the Musical Director carefully ignore any explanation of, or excuse for, the ban imposed recently on jazz music.<sup>106</sup>

However, another column only three months earlier asked ‘Has Radio Éireann partially reconsidered its “no crooners, no dance-music” ban?’, citing broadcasts of recordings by Paul Robeson and Deanna Durbin. The unsigned author added: ‘This sample, of

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100 Ó hAllmhuráin, 11 (fn 5); Shanagher, 126; Sheehy; Mullaney-Dignam, 266; Ryan, Joseph, 627.

101 Gorham, 121-122.

102 Mullaney-Dignam, 268.

103 Ryan, Joseph, 627.

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 ‘Radio Eireann’, *Irish Times*, 27 July 1943, 3.

course, does not qualify as “hot” jazz, but several of the items were definitely dance numbers.’<sup>107</sup> The article states that the so-called ban had operated in two parts: the first, prohibiting ‘crooners’, being circulated among staff two months earlier, and a more recent edict outlawing all dance music.<sup>108</sup> Even if most commentators agree there was no official ban on the broadcasting of jazz and modern music by Radio Éireann, it was perceived as a ban by the general public who, according to Mullaney-Dignam, let their opinion be known in the national papers.<sup>109</sup>

## 2.11 Jazz in Dublin 1930s-1945

George Hodnett described the period from 1934 as being characterised by ‘a riff-type of tight orchestral arrangement for big bands, derived from the Kansas City style of jazz’, and being ‘widely marketed under the name of “swing”’.<sup>110</sup> Hodnett seems to imply that jazz was primarily being experienced through recordings; however, importantly, he states that ‘esoteric jazz clubs sprang up, for serious listening and playing’.<sup>111</sup> Interestingly, an article in the British magazine *Jazz News* from 1962 reports jazz being played in Dublin at a venue known as the 44 Club in Gardner Street in the 1930s.<sup>112</sup> The article states that three musicians were paid to play in a working class dance hall, and that a jazz group was ‘usually found with Des Hednett in the trumpet chair’, which is clearly a reference to George Desmond Hodnett.<sup>113</sup>

The *Jazz News* article reports that the first post-war Irish jazz society appeared as a result of a suggestion by Andy Flynn, a Dublin journalist who ran a weekly jazz column in the defunct *People’s Weekly*.<sup>114</sup> Society sessions were held at the Broadway Café, which included both local musicians and ‘record recitals’, but the society closed ‘after some years’ due to financial difficulties.<sup>115</sup>

Together, the articles from *Jazz News* and the *Irish Times* account for the earliest known written accounts of an early jazz scene in Ireland. Taken together, these articles provide

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107 ‘Dance Music on Radio Eireann’, *Irish Times*, 18 May 1943, 1.

108 *Ibid.*

109 For further information of the ‘banning’ of jazz in Ireland from 1943–1948 see Mullaney-Dignam, 269. The BBC placed on ban on ‘hot music’ between 1935 and 1940. See Schwartz, Dr Roberta Freund: *How Britain Got the Blues: The Transmission and Reception of American Blues Style in the United Kingdom*, (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013).

110 Hodnett, George, 8.

111 *Ibid.*

112 This is probably meant to be Gardiner Street.

113 ‘Dublin Jazz Story’, *Jazz News*, 12 September 1962, 2.

114 *Ibid.*

115 *Ibid.*

evidence for a scene of enthusiasts—including listeners, musicians, and venues—involved in the processes of the production of jazz and, importantly, the discourses of authenticity surrounding it. Salient also is the emphasis on the youthfulness of each successive relaunch of the scene, a phenomenon that is still apparent today. In addition, both sources cite mobility and travel as an element in terms of how jazz came to Ireland and how musicians travelled from Ireland and engaged with a wider European or American scene.

Further evidence of the increasing movement of culture is seen in the story of Josephine Mitchell, a singer, saxophonist, and bandleader. Born in Dublin in 1903, Mitchell began playing the saxophone from an early age (reportedly the first woman in Ireland to do so), and performed in London with her brother. She took the stage name ‘Zandra’ and toured Switzerland and Germany before settling in Berlin. In a radio documentary about her life, Marc McMenamin states that during this time she met and played with jazz legends Coleman Hawkins and Django Reinhardt, and led her band ‘Baby Mitchell and her Queens of Jazz’.<sup>116</sup> Upon her return to Ireland she remained unknown and lived in a family holiday home as a recluse in Donegal until her death in 1995.<sup>117</sup> The story of Josephine Mitchell was virtually unknown until the broadcast of this documentary on RTÉ Lyric FM on Christmas Day 2015, and it again demonstrates the stories that can easily go undocumented.<sup>118</sup> In addition, it raised issues about women in jazz in Ireland and beyond, but also shows how jazz, travel, and the flows of culture were very much interconnected early in the twentieth century.

## **2.12 Change in Reception in the 1940s**

If Radio Éireann, the Gaelic League, the Catholic Church, and certain members of the government all had problems with the idea of jazz, a perusal of the *Irish Times* from 1940 onwards starts to show a decline in the amount of column space dedicated to racialized depictions of jazz as a ‘primitive’ music, and a move toward a more tolerant viewpoint. Patrick Campbell, writing under the pseudonym Quidnunc in the ‘An Irishman’s Diary’ column of 23 February 1940, recalls the ‘furore’ caused ‘by a negro girl named Maxine Sullivan, who dared to “swing” or “jazz” “The Bonny Banks of

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116 McMenamin, Marc: ‘Zandra: A Sentimental Journey’, Dublin: RTÉ Lyric FM, (2015) <<https://soundcloud.com/the-lyric-feature/zandra-a-sentimental-journey>> [Accessed 8 March 2016].

117 Ryan, Órla: ‘The fascinating story of an Irish jazz sensation who witnessed the Nazis come to power’, *The Journal*, (2015) <<http://www.thejournal.ie/zandra-irish-saxophonist-2496617-Dec2015/>> [Accessed 8 March 2016].

118 McMenamin.

Loch Lomond”’.<sup>119</sup> Campbell also tells a story of listening to a ‘negro artist’ in the Torch Theatre singing a rendition of ‘Come Back, Paddy Reilly, to Ballyjamesduff’ in the manner of the famous tenor John McCormack, before taking the chorus in ‘real Harlem style, at the same time performing the evolution known as “trucking”’.<sup>120</sup> Campbell wrote ‘at a time when all our local variety talent is copying America as closely as it can, it was interesting to see the “other side” returning the compliment’ and went backstage to discover the singer was a Jamaican named Arthur Bennet, ‘who has played in bands in the West End of London’. He added that Bennet was looking for more Irish songs suitable for ‘swinging’, and that the Jamaican ‘hopes that Ireland will not treat him as harshly as Scotland did Maxine Sullivan. I wonder!’<sup>121</sup>

While not a wholehearted endorsement of jazz, it is quite a turnaround from the reporting on jazz of only five years earlier. A similar change in the air is seen in another 1940 article reporting on restrictions that had been imposed on a dancing licence issued by District Justice Goff.<sup>122</sup> The licensee of the hall in question objected to the requirement that a minimum charge of eight pence be placed on any jazz dancing, an insistence that one of the dances per week would be solely Irish dancing, that people from outside a limit of five miles would not be admitted into the dance hall, and finally that couples should not be allowed to be ‘sitting-out’ in motor cars during the dance.<sup>123</sup> In relation to the Irish dancing, Judge Comyn KC at Dundalk Circuit Court stated that he would have been ‘glad if the hall licensee had accepted the condition, but the condition was one which could not lawfully be imposed’. Similarly all the other conditions were struck out as being either illegal or unenforceable.<sup>124</sup>

District Justice Goff and Judge Comyn KC had a similar disagreement in rulings a month later, as Comyn overturned a refusal to grant a dance hall license, being quoted as saying that ‘by common law of this country dancing was a lawful pastime. An assembly for the purpose of dancing was not an unlawful assembly.’<sup>125</sup>

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119 Patrick Campbell cited in Pierce, David: *Irish Writing in the Twentieth Century: A Reader*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), 527.

120 *Ibid.*; Trucking is a dance move associated with jazz dance.

121 Campbell, Patrick: ‘An Irishman’s Diary’, *Irish Times*, 23 February 1940, 3.

122 ‘Dance Hall Licenses’, *Irish Times*, 19 October 1940, 8.

123 *Ibid.*

124 *Ibid.*

125 ‘Dancing is not unlawful’, *Irish Times*, 6 November 1940, 6.

The period from 1919 to 1940 represented a tumultuous time for jazz in Ireland and indeed for the nation as a whole. While the world's first jazz recording was made in 1917, Ireland had a musician, Henry Foy, purporting to play in the style (living on the west coast of the country) by 1919.<sup>126</sup> Jazz spread through Europe as a construct with racial and cultural connotations, with aural representations of the construct soon becoming targets of claims of ownership and authenticity. At the same time, jazz was being constructed in Ireland in both racialized and sexualised ways in order to promote a particular sense of nation that stood opposed to external influences. For the new nation state of Ireland, insularity was the dominant cultural mode. Music representing a threat to the identity building aims of those in power quickly became a source of tension. At a time when nation building and national identity were so important, jazz was labelled as non-Irish and 'foreign' and therefore undesirable. Despite this, the period following 1940 is one that shows evidence of a consistent group of participants who both played and listened to jazz, and therefore began to contribute to the global discourse on jazz through their participation.

### **2.13 Dublin 'Jam Session' 1945**

A full page in the *Times Pictorial* was given to a jazz concert in 1945 in the Olympia Theatre under the heading 'This is a "Jam Session"'.<sup>127</sup> Featuring seven photographs, the article reports on a Sunday afternoon 'jam session' held by the Irish Rhythm Club. Listed as playing are: Cecil Bell (trumpet), Jack Gregory (guitar), Roy Brewer (trombone), Charlie Deveney (saxophone), Jimmy Burke (saxophone), Wilf Sprakes (saxophone), Bridie McGuinness ('guest crooner from Belfast'), Bridie Howitt (vocals or 'crooner'), John Byrne (trumpet), Dick Burbridge (piano), Eamonn Williams (double bass), Joe Dowling (trombone) and Jim Burke (possibly Jimmy Burke, clarinet).<sup>128</sup> The text reveals that the musicians were drawn from 'leading Dublin bands, and are considered to be the best possible combination'. It continues:

The band played several of its own selected jazz arrangements and improvisations, and later they played, impromptu, several pieces which were chosen at random by members of the audience.<sup>129</sup>

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126 A newspaper report from 1924 claims the 'Jazz' dance was introduced to Ireland in 1918. See: Ackland, Norman: 'Swan Song of Modern America: Good and Bad Jazz', *Irish Independent*, 25 July 1924, 6.

127 'This is a "Jam Session"', *Irish Pictorial*, 3 March 1945, 12.

128 *Ibid.*

129 *Ibid.*

Within the same edition of *Times Pictorial* was an article by one Joseph Soape.<sup>130</sup> This article is interesting as it appears to be the first known ‘review’ of a jazz gig in Ireland. Indeed, the fact that it is written in a comical, irreverent style demonstrates the change in feeling toward a music that had—only ten years earlier—been written about as a source of evil.

The author states that he declines to use terms such as ‘hot licks’ and ‘in the groove’, as it would obtain the same result as if ‘Walter Winchell, American columnist, were to describe a ceilidh by saying: “Musha, the spalpeens do be battherin’ the flure wid dere crubeens”’.<sup>131</sup> He notes that ‘[a] Jam Session is a matter of improvisation’ and goes on to describe a typical performance:

The pianist begins, perhaps, with “Lady Be Good.” (This bearded old number is curiously popular with Jam Sessionists.) The drums start to beat out the rhythm, assisted by the guitar. The others feel about, getting the speed of the court. Then one of them is suddenly inspired. He launches forth into wild improvisation on the theme of “Lady Be Good,” playing any sequence of notes that comes into his head. The other musicians fill in a suitable background, their efforts directed by sheer providence. Now another musician gets an idea. He breaks in with his own instrument, drowning the first. He plays till his imagination runs out. At the end everybody plays together, in a completely disordered crescendo of sound. It’s lovely.<sup>132</sup>

Following this description, the author recounts how theatres in New York have been ‘partly dismantled’ by audiences at jam sessions, ‘their emotions have been so deeply stirred that they have taken up the seats and waved them in the air’. He reports that the Olympia Theatre, Dublin, was sold out, full of young people. The description of the event revolved around the presence of some Americans: ‘I moved in beside the American visitors. This was going to be something approaching the real stuff.’<sup>133</sup> Again, issues of authenticity are at play. While the music is being performed by Irish musicians, it is the presence and appreciation of the American visitors that reveals that this is going to be ‘approaching the real stuff’. American performances in theatres in New York are given as examples of where ‘emotions have been so deeply stirred’.

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130 Soape, Joseph: ‘Jazz Jam Session Jivey’, *Irish Pictorial*, 3 March 1945, 8. Since there are no other articles written in the *Irish Times* nor any record of a Joseph Soape, it is probable that the name is a pseudonym and a play on ‘Joe Soap’, British rhyming slang for dope, or a foolish or gullible person.

131 A loose translation of which could be: ‘Oh my, the rascals are battering the floor with their trotters (feet).’

132 *Ibid.*

133 *Ibid.*



Indeed, an article in *Jazz News* from 1962 states how a series of concerts held by the Irish Federation of Musicians at the Olympia in the early 1950s ceased because of ‘claims of damage to the theatre’.<sup>134</sup> It is a statement that could have been omitted but is included because the connection to ‘rebelliousness’ gives the story more authenticity, as does another in the same article of a razor fight breaking out during a session, and George Hodnett and the band playing on in ‘true Chicago style!’<sup>135</sup>

After the band began to play, one of the Americans shouted out. The article continues:

‘Waah—hit it, boy!’ He began twitching in his seat, stamping his feet on the floor. I watched him closely, seeing how the whole thing worked. The clarinet took up the theme. The American closed his eyes in ecstasy. He shrugged his shoulders back and forth. Then he called: “Yeah! Shake it out, boys!” He clapped his hands rhythmically for a moment or two. “Yeah!” he shouted: “rub it out, boy!” By now the whole audience was rocking backwards and forwards in time to the music. All down the aisles feet were tapping out the rhythm. All over the theatre were cries of: “Yeeah!” and “Shake it out!” The Irish nation in the Olympia Theatre had, as if born to it, gone all jumbley-jivey.<sup>136</sup>

After an appeal for a ‘Sean Sinatra’, an Irish equivalent to Frank Sinatra, who had recently had eggs thrown at him (thereby, according to the author, ‘setting the seal upon the singer’s popularity’), the author ends with this jovial declaration:

All that we need now is our own “Voice,” the Olympia Theatre, a supply of eggs, and we have advanced one stage farther upon the road to complete and irremediable civilisation.<sup>137</sup>

There is a thin line between derision and humour in the article. One possible reason could be that it could be taken by an older generation as evidence of the advance along ‘the road to complete and irremediable civilisation’, or as expressing the fun and spirit involved in participating in the jam session for a younger generation, thus satisfying both parties. What is clear is the position of authority given to the Americans, their presence having given the event a level of authenticity. The physicality of the music is also highlighted, with phrases including: ‘closed his eyes in ecstasy’, ‘he shrugged his shoulders back and forth’, ‘he clapped his hand rhythmically’, ‘by now the whole audience was rocking backwards and forwards’, and ‘[a]ll down the aisles feet were

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134 ‘Dublin Jazz Story’, 2.

135 *Ibid.*

136 Soape, 8.

137 *Ibid.*



tapping out the rhythm'.<sup>138</sup> The response to a jazz performance is embodied and expressed vocally and in body movements and this, according to the author, was part of the (tongue-in-cheek) 'progress' of civilisation.

The 1945 'Jam Session' was presented by the Irish Rhythm Club, while *Jazz News* reports also on a South Dublin Rhythm Club, which presented traditional jazz weekly and published Ireland's 'only jazz magazine to date', *Hot Notes*, edited by Eric Keatland, (probably Eric F. Keartland), which lasted from 1945-1948 and consisted of at least eleven issues.<sup>139</sup> In addition a 'Swing Club' existed for a short time with an interest in the 'Goodman, Shaw and Dorsey type of jazz'.<sup>140</sup> The Dublin No. 1 Rhythm Club met fortnightly at the time of a newspaper article from 1944. It reports on a gathering of more than seventy young people, mostly under the age of twenty, sitting in orderly rows around an electric gramophone while three young men 'presented a series of about ten records each, choosing different themes to illustrate their point.'<sup>141</sup>

The concept of rhythm clubs started in Britain, denoting gatherings of jazz enthusiasts who would meet to listen to and discuss jazz recordings. The rhythm clubs grew in popularity rapidly from 1933, and by the end of 1935 ninety-eight clubs had been formed in Britain, centred on the London area.<sup>142</sup> Stuart Nicholson reports on the concept spreading quickly throughout Europe: Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Germany, and notably the Hot Club of France, formed in 1932.<sup>143</sup> Nicholson notes how the mediation of jazz through the experience of the listening clubs produced a 'unique socially and culturally constructed circumstance' of an audience, 'completely dislocated from the inductive effect of the cultural and social ritual associated with the creation of jazz in American clubs, bars and dance halls'.<sup>144</sup> However disconnected from American cultural life the early rhythm clubs may have been, it appears from the archival sources discussed here that at least some of the Irish jazz societies' activities were based around live performance.

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138 *Ibid.*

139 *Ibid.* ; 'National Jazz Archive', <<http://www.nationaljazzarchive.co.uk/catalogue>> [Accessed 12 May 2016]; 'SearchWorks', stanford.edu, <<http://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/6666899>> [Accessed 12 May 2016].

140 'Dublin Jazz Story', 2.

141 Lang, Andrew: 'An Irishman's Diary', *Irish Times*, 29 February 1944, 3.

142 Newton, Francis: *The Jazz Scene*, (London: Penguin Books, 1961), 238.

143 Nicholson, Stuart: *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, (Lebanon, NH: Northeastern University Press, 2014), 54.

144 *Ibid.*

## 2.14 Dublin Jazz Scene 1945-1963

In 1962, the British magazine *Jazz News* reported that the ‘jazz revival proper hit Dublin in the forties’, with Ivor, Val, and Ismay Brown holding sessions in their Sandycove home.<sup>145</sup> Brian Hopper formed ‘his Dixielanders’ soon after and ‘kept jazz going in the city until the advent of the Night Owls’.<sup>146</sup> According to *Jazz News*, the Night Owls played together from 1949 until 1957.<sup>147</sup> In a letter to the editor in the same edition, Dara O’Lochlann, president of the Dublin Jazz Society, also lists Brian Hopper and the Brown Brother’s Dixielanders [sic], in addition to the South Dublin Rhythm Club, ‘which specialised in traditional jazz’, as operating in the 1940s.<sup>148</sup> By the early 1950s, the Irish Rhythm Club and the South Dublin Rhythm Club appear to have been replaced by the Downbeaters Club, a group of musicians who gathered to listen to and play jazz. Described in a 1952 article as ‘dispensers of classical jazz in the modern manner’, they had a series of Sunday afternoon ‘recitals’ in the Green Lounge, on St Stephen’s Green.<sup>149</sup> The Downbeaters Club was also responsible for a series of Jazz Jamborees that ran in the Olympia Theatre from at least 1952–1955.<sup>150</sup>

Although reported in 1954 as meeting ‘privately of course’, by 1961, an event called the Downbeat Club had become an open event for live broadcast on Radio Éireann, though the author of the article, a ‘G.A. Olden’ (another witty pseudonym) demonstrates that understandings of jazz are still far from clear, first describing it as a ‘session of recorded pop music’, but soon after expressing surprise that the show managed to get any airtime on Radio Éireann, due to its previous perceived ban on jazz and swing.<sup>151</sup> Bobby Laurence (probably Bobby Lawless) was reported in 1955 as organising the annual Jazz Jamboree, and the article continues:

Bobby’s big problem is not who’ll play but who to leave out. City bands abound with talent and Bobby has the unenviable job of trying to fit in the different “groups” and, with Johnny Devlin, of trying to select the personnel of the 18-piece “Downbeaters” band which is the highlight of the show.<sup>152</sup>

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145 ‘Dublin Jazz Story’, 2.

146 *Ibid.*

147 *Ibid.*

148 O’Lochlann, Dara: ‘Letter from Dublin’, *Jazz News*, 12 September 1962, 4.

149 Dancalot: ‘Downbeaters warming up for Jazz-Jamboree’, *Times Pictorial*, 29 March 1952, 12.

150 *Ibid.*; ‘The sound makes this band’, *Times Pictorial*, 12 March 1955, 14.

151 Dancalot: ‘They stole notes right out of this world’, *Times Pictorial*, 17 April 1954, 10; Olden, G.A.: ‘R.E. Digs The Pops’, *Irish Times*, 3 August 1961, 8.

152 ‘The Sound Makes This Band’, 14.

Pianist Jim Doherty, born in 1939, says of the late 1950s: ‘There were gigs everywhere, it’s hard to imagine, I used to work four nights a week but that was before I left my day job.’ He remembers Johnny Devlin having a big band in 1952, 1953, almost twenty years before his own in 1971, ‘and there were some very good musicians around, Joe Coughlan was a great clarinet player... he was a band leader in the Metropole Hotel, *don’t forget that every musician played for dancing*. All Ireland danced, all the time, you know’ (emphasis mine). Doherty gained valuable experience through working so much:

Each gig was with a different band, I worked with a tenor player, an alto player and a trumpet, they were nearly all quartets... but the repertoire was somewhat the same, it was a great education. We were playing the top forty of the day and the great American songbook, but if you were playing them on a Saturday night with an alto player, everything would be in Eb and Ab, then you’d play the same tunes (with a tenor player or trumpeter) and everything would be in Bb and C and F. I remember getting a gig with a very bad guitar player and he would call out, “You know Pennies from Heaven?”, “Yeah”, “B Major”, “Oh Jesus, where’s that?” But it was a great education, you know.<sup>153</sup>

A brief examination of the *Irish Times* from 1945 up to 1963 demonstrates an ever-growing enthusiasm for jazz in Dublin. The 1950s saw an increasing number of touring international artists such as Stan Kenton (1953), Woody Herman and his Third Herd (1954),<sup>154</sup> Humphrey Lyttelton (1955),<sup>155</sup> and Louis Armstrong (1956).<sup>156</sup> These tours were largely able to occur because of the British Musicians’ Union exchange system, which prevented many American artists from playing in Britain. Instead, many came to Dublin, as did large crowds from both Ireland and Britain to see them.

Names associated with Dublin jazz as recorded in the *Irish Times* include: Shay Nolan, Jimmy Watson, Chick Smith, Con Fury, Maurice Tobin, and Earl Gill (trumpets); Johnny Devlin, Pat Moran, and Pete Roxburgh (bandleaders); Joe Coughlan, Paddy Coleman, Dermont Bremerton, Jimmy Greer, and Rory McGuinness (saxophones); Desmond McCarthy and Hugh Daly (piano); Harry McHugh (guitar); Emilio Macari (piano-accordion, saxophone, drums); Tony McDonald, Wally Spence, Bobby Lambe [sic], and Paddy Potts (trombones); Eamonn Williams (bass); and Shan Wilkinson and

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<sup>153</sup> Doherty, Jim: Interview by author, 10 June 2014.

<sup>154</sup> ‘Visitors from Britain for “jazz” concert’, *Irish Times*, 3 May 1954, 4.

<sup>155</sup> ‘Dublin Jazz Fans To Hear Humphrey Lyttelton’s Band’, *Irish Pictorial*, 29 January 1955, 14.

<sup>156</sup> Moore, Al: ‘Needlepoint: Invasion by “Satchmo” fans?’, *Irish Times*, 28 April 1956, 11.

Bobby Laurence (sic; probably Bobby Lawless) (drums).<sup>157</sup> Writing in 1962, Dara O’Lochlann also lists Phil Butler, Pat Connell, John Curran, Norman Mongan, and the ‘gallant McDonald brothers’ as musicians who ‘slaved to keep sessions going in Dublin for the last 10 years often (as in my case with the Dublin Jazz Club) paying for the hire of the premises out of their own pockets!’<sup>158</sup>

Dara O’Lochlann’s letter to *Jazz News* demonstrates that, even from the earliest reports, there were multiple perspectives of the Dublin jazz scene. In August 1962, J.B.C. Hurley wrote an account of the Dublin jazz scene for the Regional Round-up section of *Jazz News*.<sup>159</sup> In it, he claimed that ‘Just over two years ago Traditional Jazz (as we know it) stormed in Ireland [...]’. He goes on to call Dublin ‘jazz-starved’ and in a ‘shambles’, before singing the praises of the group Eblana, who play ‘gimmickless Jazz’. Hurley also mentioned a weekly gig by the Dixieland Rhythm Kings in Howth, Co. Dublin, two gigs weekly in the Green Lounge on Stephen’s Green, and the Eblana Jazzmen playing weekly in the Dublin Jazz Club.<sup>160</sup> Demonstrating an early example of the contestation that would become a feature of the Dublin jazz scene, Dara O’Lochlann criticised Hurley in a reply, suggesting that he should ‘check his facts with his predecessors on the scene before rushing more than somewhat erroneously into print’.<sup>161</sup> Indeed, an article that was published two pages preceding the letter reported that ‘several Irishmen now resident in London claimed the picture it gave was not accurate’.<sup>162</sup> O’Lochlann in the accompanying article mounted a defence of the Dublin jazz scene, wherein O’Lochlann apologises to ‘all Dublin’s Jazzmen who have helped us keep the Jazz Scene on its feet for so long and to *Jazz News* readers for Mr Hurley’s well meaning but misguided report’.<sup>163</sup>

Hodnett argues that the prominence of ‘popular music’—which, up to a few years earlier (writing in 1963), had used the same instrumentation as jazz—had drained the scene of ‘promising jazzmen as soon as they could play properly, to a life of commercial playing’. Whereas now, he felt, the prominence of guitars could actually

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157 ‘Trumpet Player’, *Irish Pictorial*, 28 August 1954, 21; Gay: ‘Band Parade’, *Times Pictorial*, 12 August 1950, 12; Dancalot, ‘Dancing Times’, *Times Pictorial*, 8 March 1952, 12; Dancalot, ‘Downbeaters Warming up for Jazz-Jamboree’, 12.

158 ‘Letter from Dublin’, 4.

159 J.B.C. Hurley: ‘Regional Round Up: Dublin—the green scene’, *Jazz News*, 22 August 1962, 4.

160 *Ibid.* The location of the Dublin Jazz Club is not mentioned but in the 1950s they had regular sessions in the Green Lounge also. See: Twamley, Noel: ‘Dancing Days in Dublin’, *NewsFour*, (2010), 10.

161 ‘Letter from Dublin’, 4.

162 ‘Dublin Jazz Story’, 2.

163 ‘Letter from Dublin’, 4.

result in wind players being able to stay in the jazz world, ‘helping to keep it going and making it pay’.<sup>164</sup> There is a certain contradiction here, again connected with the economic discourse surrounding jazz, that ‘jazzmen’ are ‘drained’ to ‘a life of commercial playing’, the implication being that they are no longer able to live the life of a ‘jazzman’, and that the taint of playing commercial music hinders the artists’ ability for self-expression within jazz.

While jazz then was, presumably, uncommercial, Hodnett still hoped, nevertheless, that they would be able to ‘make it pay’. The connotation with the word ‘commercial’ is that it is a sell-out, like its synonym ‘advertisement’; the valued qualities of the jazz musician are to do with self-expression and artistry, not with commercial success. Then, as now, the greatest respect within the jazz scene can often be reserved for the ‘artist’ who refuses to sell out. Then, as now, the musicians needed to create an existence for themselves that both created meaning and enabled them to survive economically.

The problem with this narrative of jazz musician as artist untainted by commerciality is that it did not, and still does not, reflect the day-to-day lives of the vast majority of those involved in any jazz scene throughout the entire history of jazz scenes, and, particularly relevant for this study, those involved in the Dublin jazz scene. That is not to say that there are not musicians who eschew commercial work but instead subsidise their living through teaching or another form of income, but for many musicians a paying gig was, and still is, often just that.

The overwhelming point is that, in considering the jazz scene of the 50s and 60s, dance bands and commercial entertainment should not be disregarded. Although arguments will continue about the ‘purity’ of jazz performance when considering such scenes—and it is currently only fashionable to consider ‘art ensembles’ worthy of study—an understanding of the contemporary scene would not be accurate without consideration of the wider commercial systems in which musicians are situated, as this can inform our understanding of past scenes.

### **2.15 Showbands and Jazz in the 1960s**

When Hodnett wrote his first article on the jazz scene it was 1963, and a different scene altogether was in full swing. Jim Doherty says: ‘The whole of Ireland was dance mad, in the 60s, there were 700 showbands in this country in 1964—most of them

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<sup>164</sup> Hodnett, George, 8.

professional; they played for dances, everyone criss-crossing Ireland in Volkswagen minibuses.<sup>165</sup> In his thesis entitled ‘Recreational Dance in Ireland 1940–1960: Politics and Pleasures’, Sean Shanagher focuses on ‘small farmers’ in north Co. Roscommon. Shanagher investigates the enthusiasm shown to ‘modern dances’ by young people from 1940–1960 and contends that the ‘dance craze’ that hit Irish shores in the 1940s has been neglected in the literature, in respects to ‘the central role given it by young people at the time’.<sup>166</sup>

Although Shanagher focused on the arrival of a dance craze in the 1940s, the phenomenon was not new. A newspaper item from 1911 reports on the demise of a classical dancing craze, while a 1922 article reports on a dance craze in Paris, and by 1924 the Bishop of Galway was denouncing a dancing craze that involved dances ‘more and more impure, until a decent man or woman could not look in to the modern dance hall without shame’.<sup>167</sup> The constant birth and rebirth of the dance craze was affected by a growing globalisation, tied in with the invention of the gramophone, wireless broadcasts, and, at a more local level, an increased mobility due to the availability of bicycles.

The modern dance hall continued to contribute to the changing nature of dance in Ireland. Shanagher discusses the establishment of a national chain of modern dance halls in the late 1950s, with each hall holding thousands of dancers.<sup>168</sup> While previous dance halls had been run by local committees or were family run, the capitalist enterprise nature of the commercial dance hall brought about many changes in the nature of national dance cultures. Whereas house dances would have often had music provided by collections of local musicians, the new dance halls were provided for by ‘tighter, professional units who would have been paid in cash, travelled by car between halls and invested in new technologies such as PA systems’.<sup>169</sup> These ‘tighter, professional units’ were originally dance orchestras, or dance bands, and from the late 1950s were gradually replaced by showbands.

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<sup>165</sup> Doherty interview.

<sup>166</sup> Shanagher, 120.

<sup>167</sup> ‘Miss Maud Allan in Dublin’, *Weekly Irish Times*, 16 September 1911, 4; ‘Woman and Her Home: Dancing Craze’, *Irish Times*, 13 November 1922, 3; ‘The Poteen Traffic: Bishop of Galway’s Denunciation’, *Irish Times*, 9 April 1924, 9.

<sup>168</sup> Shanagher, 215.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

In *Noisy Island*, Gerry Smyth observes that the showbands are often used as a point of departure in the study of popular music in Ireland, but that they also had an inheritance of ‘an uncertain and overlapping mesh of *ceilidh* bands, dance orchestras, and the odd jazz combo which no one, [to his knowledge], has as yet adequately described’.<sup>170</sup> The showband era is indeed an important bridging period from the dance bands of the 1940s and 1950s, over which time jazz was constantly redefined, keeping its popular music perception in some respects but also being recast as both a niche music and an art music.

The Clipper Carlton from Strabane, Co. Tyrone, is credited as being the first band to come out from behind their music stands, exchange black suits for ‘natty blazers’, and recreate popular dance music as if they were enjoying it, rather than just reproducing it for the purposes of dancing.<sup>171</sup> The economic arrangements had also changed drastically, with bands taking a percentage of the door rather than a flat fee. More important, Smyth has argued, was the extended musical range that the Clipper Carlton played. Smyth claims that ‘recently unearthed recordings’ included numbers from ‘most of the popular genres of the day’, including skiffle, show tunes (‘New York, New York’), country, calypso, Bill Haley era rock ‘n’ roll, light jazz instrumentals, a Shadows’ medley, and various ‘Irish’ ballads and tunes, ‘all performed to a high musical standard’.<sup>172</sup>

Despite the success of the showbands being linked to dancing, Smyth argues that the Clipper Carlton’s most significant contribution to the movement was a feature called the ‘Juke Box Saturday Night’ which encouraged the cessation of dancing for a period while the crowd watched the band perform various ‘comedy routines and personality spots’.<sup>173</sup> The rise of the showbands was, of course, tied into the growth of American rock’n’roll throughout many parts of the world.<sup>174</sup> There were significant differences between the bands coming out of America and the Irish showbands, however. Smyth argues that while the new music emerging from America in the early 1960s valued ‘*expressive originality*’ and ‘*authenticity*’, the Irish showbands valued ‘*accuracy*’ and

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170 Smyth, Gerry: *Noisy Island: A Short History of Irish Popular Music*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 2005), 11.

171 *Ibid.*

172 *Ibid.*, 12.

173 *Ibid.*

174 *Ibid.*



*'entertainment'* (italics in original).<sup>175</sup> Additionally, whereas American rock'n'roll targeted a youth audience, showbands aimed to appeal (at least at first) to a larger age demographic.

Academic research has largely ignored the showband scene, not to mention any connection between the showbands and jazz. Some, if not most, 'jazz' musicians would be eager to distance the jazz scene from the showband scene, viewing it largely as inhabited by unsophisticated part-time musicians who could not play their instruments. Jim Doherty says:

It was opportunistic, it's hard to imagine how insular this country was. I mean, there was a band called the Platters, and probably the best showband that ever was in terms of singing was the Freshmen, from just north of Newry, and the first time I heard them I thought they were a knockout because they were doing all these wonderful four-, five-, six-part harmonies. And at the time, of course, the foremost vocal group in the world was the Four Freshmen. I said, "Why did you call yourselves that? You know if you ever get out of this country you'll have to change your name." They said, "Nah, sure nobody'd, we'll never..."—it was like, "We don't have any ambition beyond these shores."<sup>176</sup>

The insular nature of the island at this time is demonstrated by the fact that although Northern Ireland began to receive British television in 1955, it was not until 31 December 1961 that an Irish television service was established in the Republic of Ireland, as the Irish Free State had by then become.<sup>177</sup>

While the mythology surrounding the showband scene is full of stories of people buying instruments and playing gigs within a few weeks, I would argue that there were also many connections between jazz musicians and the showband scene, as showbands were an easy source of employment, especially as they were taking work that had previously been in the realm of the dance band or dance orchestra. Musicians who were already established, or had a different source of income, may have found it easier to stay out of the more 'commercial' showband scene, but my own experience in Galway showed that many of the older musicians who were involved in playing jazz had been part of the showband scene. Often very humble, these musicians may not have made the 'real jazz

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<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>176</sup> Doherty interview.

<sup>177</sup> Daly, Mary E: 'Social Change Since 1922', in *Encyclopedia of Irish History and Culture*, ed. James S. Donnelly Jr., (Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 663–668.



musician' status, as would be expected today, but they were very fine musicians. Many would have used music performance as a major source of income throughout their careers, and would possess good tone, intonation, and rhythmic ability on their instruments.

Again, this is a topic on which a lot more research is required before the opportunity to speak to those directly involved passes. Stephen Hunter in *The Archive*, a joint initiative of the Northside Community Enterprises Ltd and the Centre for Folklore and Ethnology at University College Cork states that the Dixies Showband started life with trad jazz sessions at the Shandon Boat Club.<sup>178</sup> Jim Doherty, aged around 21, left a steady bank job to join the Chris Lamb Showband in October 1960 (Chris Lamb is the brother of jazz trombonist Bobby Lamb). He tells a story that after about a month the guitar player left or was sacked and 'about 500 guys turned up to replace him'. He continues:

The bandleader said to me, "You know about chords, you audition them, the new guys". So this skinny kid called Louis Stewart came in, age 16, and I'd had about 100 guys before him, all wanting to sing Buddy Holly tunes and Elvis, and Louis got up and said, "Do you know any Benny Goodman tunes?" So we played 'Seven Come Eleven' for about half an hour. I went to the bandleader and said, "We've got our man, send the others home".<sup>179</sup>

Trumpeter Mike Nolan, a mainstay on the Irish jazz scene from 1971 through to the 1990s, played with Billy Brown (a star of the showband scene) and with the Pacific Showband, which later became the Dublin Corporation,<sup>180</sup> while saxophonist Richie Buckley played with showbands in his late teens, in the late 1970s.<sup>181</sup>

Although Doherty initially downplayed the connections between showbands and jazz musicians, saying that only three musicians would have been playing jazz on the side, he conceded that 'there were a lot of guys from the North, the best musicians always seemed to come, funnily enough, a lot of the good guys came from the North'.<sup>182</sup>

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178 Hunter, Stephen: 'The Dixies: A Northside Showband', *The Archive: Journal of the Northside Folklore Project*, 1, (1997), 2.

179 Doherty interview.

180 Buckley, Hugh: 'Mike Nolan', *Irish Independent*, (2005)

<http://www.independent.ie/unsorted/migration/mike-nolan-26203509.html> [Accessed 30 September 2014].

181 *Ibid.*

182 Doherty interview.

The connections between the two scenes were not always a case of jazz musicians playing in showbands. Jim Doherty and Noel Kelehan became record producers in the 1960s. Says Doherty: ‘The bands themselves were mostly crap. If they were gonna make a record, I might take the saxophone player and the singer but the rest of it was all studio guys.’<sup>183</sup> The studio musicians were also often jazz musicians.<sup>184</sup> These few examples show that interactions between the jazz scene and the showband scene were happening, and it is my belief that they only scratch the surface of the complexity of the interactions. I am not asserting that the showband scene was full of jazz musicians, merely that, just as with the wedding scene today, it is logical to assume that musicians who would have considered themselves ‘jazz musicians’, in some sense of the word, would have been involved in the showband scene, and this was a location where the interactions that create meaning for jazz musicians would have occurred.<sup>185</sup>

## **2.16 Dublin Jazz 1963-1975**

It is not a coincidence that Hodnett was able to write a jazz column for the *Irish Times* from 1963. Jazz could be said to be coming of age in Dublin then. After his summary of jazz in Dublin up to the time of writing of that first article, Hodnett wrote about an upcoming concert. The Blue Note Jazz Club (a club that held Tuesday night sessions in South Frederick Street), in association with the Dublin Theatre Festival, presented two ‘Jazz in the Round’ concerts, directed by Adrian Cronin and compered by radio and television presenter Gay Byrne.<sup>186</sup> Featured in the first concert are some of the names that were to represent the scene throughout the 1960s: Ian Henry, the Jazz Heralds, and the Louis Stewart Quartet. The second concert consisted of ‘trad’ jazz bands: the Eblana Jazz Band, Sid Bailey and his Jazz Band, and Ian Henry again.

The scene in the 1960s is often represented by a small group of musicians, focused around Jim Doherty (piano), Noel Kelehan (piano), and the pre-eminent Irish jazz musician, Louis Stewart (guitar), whose influence on the Dublin jazz scene will be considered in more detail later. Although these musicians perhaps represented the highest achievers in terms of a career and musical proficiency, there were numerous musicians ‘on the scene’ who performed regularly week after week. Other musicians who were performing from at least the mid-1960s included John Curran (saxophone,

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<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> For a personal account of the connections between jazz and showbands see: Hopkins, Des: *Showbands and all that Jazz*, (Hihat Publishing, 2016).

<sup>186</sup> Hodnett, George, 8.

flute), Phil Daly (trombone), Ernie Pigott (vocals), Johnny Tate (trombone), Ian McGarry (drums), Aidan Berry (bass), Joe Bevan (piano), Brian Dooley (piano), Tony Drennan (piano), Dick Buckley (saxophones), Rock Fox (also known as 'Chas' or Charles Meredith, trumpet, clarinet, saxophones), Phil Butler aka Cudworth (clarinet), Bert Crosland (guitar), Jack Daly (drums), Phil Daly (trombone), Charlie Devaney (saxophone), Jim Farley (saxophones), and Emilio Macari (piano-accordion, saxophone, drums). Many of these musicians were active as performing musicians before the 1960s.

The above list is by no means complete, and that work is outside the scope of this study, but the idea that the scene consisted of only a few musicians does not hold up under scrutiny. Musicians work within circles of other musicians, circles constructed by musical style, musical proficiency, and social groupings. Although for some musicians, like Jim Doherty, there were only a few drummers who were able to do the job that he required, that does not mean that there were no other musicians in existence. For example, in an interview with Doherty he stated: 'The drummers were either the Wad (Johnny Wadham) or Jack Daly, and there were only two bass players in town, Jimmy McKay and Martin Walsh. So you got one or another.'<sup>187</sup> However, there were many bands playing around Dublin and playing jazz at some level, though very possibly not up to the level that the Jim Doherty Trio were playing. Other bass players and drummers would have been fulfilling the needs and requirements of the band members, audiences, and dancers in these groups.

Another fascinating development in Irish jazz was the running of jazz gigs in The Fox Inn, Ashbourne, Co. Meath. American alto saxophonist Jim Riley and his wife Sheila bought the pub c1967 and established regular jazz gigs on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday evenings, often fronted by Jim Riley and featuring Johnny Wadham (drums), Jim McKay (bass) and Louis Stewart (guitar).<sup>188</sup> The venue is exceptional for the international artists it brought to what was essentially a country pub, a forty-five minute drive outside of Dublin. The club included appearances by Jon Hendricks (1968 and 1970), Dick Morrissey (1969), Keith Jarrett (1969), Sheila Jordan (1970), Annie Ross (1970), Carol Sloane (1970) and Mal Waldron (1970), with musicians often doing a

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<sup>187</sup> Doherty interview.

<sup>188</sup> Given, Helen: 'Dublin Jazzmen', *Trinity News*, 11 May 1967, 4; 'Classified Ad', *Irish Times*, 27 January 1967, 18.

[illegible]

## 2.17 Dublin Jazz 1975-1985

189 Hodnett, George D: 'Jarrett Trio at the Fox Inn', *Irish Times*, 20 August 1969, 10; Hodnett, George D: 'Jon Hendricks at the Fox Inn', *Irish Times*, 14 December 1968, 6; Hodnett, George D: 'U.S. jazz pianist at Fox Inn', *Irish Times*, 13 January 1970, 8; 'What's on: A Weekly Diary of the Arts', *Irish Times*, 9 March 1970, 12; 'What's on a Weekly Diary of the Arts', *Irish Times*, 1 June 1970, 10; 'What's on: A Weekly Diary of the Arts', *Irish Times*, 16 March 1970, 10; Hodnett, George D: 'Powerful Pianist at the Fox Inn', *Irish Times*, 22 April 1970, 10.  
190 'Classified Ad 32', *Irish Times*, 22 November 1972, 20; 'Ashbourne pub for auction', *Irish Times*, 19 November 1975, 16.

His next memory of live jazz was a jazz party being held by John Curran, a saxophonist and electric bass player. Guilfoyle's father, an avid music listener, 'knew everybody on the scene' and Guilfoyle remembers:

[I]t was the first time I met John Wadham. I would have been fourteen or something and we stayed there all night... I didn't know anyone but I remember Mike Nolan, Brian Dunning, Louis (Stewart), John Curran and his wife. They had food and the music started at about one o'clock in the morning, I mean the jazz, cos I remember they had to get a piano from somewhere, so someone had to bring one on a trunk, it was a serious, ah, kinda old school jam. I remember being introduced to Louis, and I didn't know Louis or who he was then, but there was the whole reverence thing was around him at that time, so it was already clear to me, or it was made clear to me, that I would be in the presence of somebody special at that time.<sup>191</sup>

Guilfoyle also recalls seeing Louis Stewart a lot when he was 17, c1975, when the guitarist would periodically return home from international work with Ronnie Scott to play a packed gig at the Baggot Inn. Another gig Guilfoyle recalls attending regularly was the Noel Kelehan Quintet on a Sunday night, in the now demolished Killiney Court Hotel, featuring John Wadham, Frank Hess, Keith Donald, and Mike Nolan: 'It was like a hard bop group, and I used to go every Sunday night for two years. I got to know people that way, got to know John.' After an invitation back to John's to listen to some records, 'I ended up in his house till four o'clock in the morning, I had to work the next day, I was working a day job'.<sup>192</sup>

In Neil Hegarty's *Waking Up In Dublin: A Musical Tour Of The Celtic Capital* (2004), the place of jazz (and indeed of classical and contemporary music) in the overall scene—in at least the author's eyes, but reflecting a wider viewpoint—could be said to be reflected in the division of the six chapters: 'Dublin's New Rock Generation', 'Dublin's Rock Icons', 'The Trad Scene', 'Dublin on Stage', and 'Sacred and Church Music' get a chapter each, with 'Classical, Contemporary and Jazz Music', sharing the honours in the final 'Dazed by the Haze' chapter.<sup>193</sup> In the book, bassist Ronan Guilfoyle represents the jazz scene in Dublin, with the author attending a concert of Guilfoyle's with Greg Felton (piano) and Sean Carpio (drums) at the Hugh Lane Gallery. In an interview Guilfoyle says of the scene in the 1970s:

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191 Guilfoyle, Ronan: Interview by author, 6 September 2014.

192 *Ibid.*

193 Hegarty, Neil: *Waking Up In Dublin*, (SMT Books, 2004).

It was very small back then, but there were great players. I played in the Tommy Halferty Trio which taught me so much; it was a great education. I learned jazz in much the same way people in America had learned twenty years ago, before jazz education came along—by simply learning on the job. There were great players, but it was a small scene.<sup>194</sup>

Two Hodnett *Irish Times* articles dating from 1978 and 1979, however, reported that the Dublin jazz scene was within the throws of another upswing. The Dublin Jazz Society was founded c1970 and had been producing a newsletter. A 1978 newsletter reported thirty gigs nationwide, with twelve in Dublin. At that time, the maximum number of jazz gigs in a week in Dublin had been seventeen.<sup>195</sup> In 1979, Hodnett reported a new record of thirty-two gigs nationwide with sixteen in Dublin, six in Cork, four in Belfast, and one each in Sligo, Limerick, Galway, Arklow, Athlone, and Waterford.<sup>196</sup> These gigs were in addition to visiting groups which included Roy Williams, Zoot Sims, Syd Lawrence Orchestra, Oscar Peterson, Ronnie Scott, Humphrey Lyttelton, the Marian Montgomery quartet and a number of multi-band ‘nine-to-two bashes’ throughout the year.<sup>197</sup>

For Guilfoyle, however, his formative years were experienced within a very small scene, demonstrating the individual perspectives and viewpoints that occur within a scene, then as now. In his interview, Guilfoyle focuses on the then current expansion of the Dublin jazz scene, noting that, at the time of interview (probably c2003), there were seventy students on the Newpark Music Centre’s full-time course, and that since 1997, 120 students had gone through the course and were now ‘out in the city.’ He continues: ‘They come to concerts and venues; they bring their friends—we have critical mass.’ The author, Hegarty, writes, “‘There is jazz all over the city now on a Sunday afternoon too,” I said. “You can hear it inside bars all over the place.” Ronan said hesitantly:

Yes, and the players are probably great, but they are terrible venues—truly terrible. People aren’t going to specifically hear jazz at those venues, after all; they are going for the ambience, for the brunch and the coffee, and to chat to friends. The best nights are the dedicated jazz nights: Sundays in JJ Smiths [sic], Friday in the Wellington, Sunday in

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194 *Ibid.*, 225.

195 Hodnett, George D.: ‘Jazz Scene: Dublin and Elsewhere’, *Irish Times*, 1 December 1978, 10.

196 Hodnett, George D.: ‘Jazz Scene: Year Departed’, *Irish Times*, 26 January 1979, 8.

197 *Ibid.*



the Boom Boom Room on Parnell Square, and Thursdays in JJ Smyth's.<sup>198</sup>

For Guilfoyle, jazz is a performance art that should be engaged with attentively, an understanding that was acknowledged to exist by Hodnett in his 1964 article.<sup>199</sup> Though he can understand music for dancing, jazz, as he sees it, stands in opposition to the 'Sunday afternoon' sessions where Guilfoyle contends that the music is secondary to the social aspects of the event. This distinction perhaps explains his more recent comments on his blog, stating that 'up to recently, while there were some great musicians here, there wasn't enough of them to constitute a "scene"'.<sup>200</sup> Indeed, while Guilfoyle seems to be aware of earlier jazz in Ireland, he suggests that it was not until the late 1950s that 'real jazz musicians appear'. He states:

Jazz had a slow start in Ireland—there were jazz influenced jazz bands in the 40s and 50s, but the first real jazz musicians began to appear at the end of the 50s and into the 60s with players such as the pianist Noel Kelehan and the drummer John Wadham, both of whom were world class. There were other players around the scene who were good also, but the real breakthrough came with the appearance of Louis Stewart, the great guitarist who was the first domiciled Irish musician to get international attention.<sup>201</sup>

The above quotation contains the anomaly that although Guilfoyle stated earlier in the article there were not enough musicians to constitute a 'scene' up till recently, he talks without caveat regarding about 'the scene' in the late 50s/60s. This demonstrates clearly the multiple perspectives and positions that musicians take in respect to scenes, even coming from the same individual. Although the bands of the 1940s and 1950s promoted themselves as playing jazz, held jam sessions, and participated in jazz societies and groups, for Guilfoyle, there are other elements that make a 'real jazz musician'. The values of jazz performance, for him, emphasise a commitment to high level playing. His blog post makes numerous references to the Dublin scene existing within a wider international community, using phrases such as 'world class', 'international attention', and 'recognised internationally'.<sup>202</sup> This reflects Guilfoyle's own engagement with an international scene and his international career. While I disagree with his assessment of

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198 Hegarty, 226-227.

199 Hodnett, George, 8.

200 Guilfoyle, Ronan: 'Mostly music: Down With Jazz! Bejayzuz!' Mostly Music, (2012) <<http://ronanguil.blogspot.ie/2012/08/down-with-jazz-bejayzuz.html>> [Accessed 30 April 2014].

201 *Ibid.*

202 *Ibid.*

when a jazz scene existed and when the first ‘real jazz musicians’ appeared, Guilfoyle’s views do represent accepted wisdom regarding jazz in Ireland. I use this example to demonstrate once again the multiplicity of perspectives that are taken in creating meaning out of jazz performance. In addition, from my own experience in the international scene, it too has multiple perspectives and the same contestation that occurs at a local level. Local scenes present a microcosm of the issues experienced in both national and international contexts.

The late 1970s jazz scene appeared at least to public commentators to be in reasonable health. In a 1977 article titled ‘Lively Local Scene’, Hodnett recommends subscribing to the Dublin Jazz Society’s monthly newsletter saying, ‘I have to waste an awful lot of breath in dealing with people who ask: “But there isn’t any jazz in Dublin, is there?”’<sup>203</sup> Following on from that, in 1983 the scene appeared to warrant the publication of a full-colour jazz magazine called ‘*Jazz News: Ireland’s jazz and blues magazine*’. The magazine was edited by Dara O’Lochlainn and produced eighteen issues between 1983 and 1986. See Figure 3.

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203 Hodnett, George D: ‘Lively Local Scene’, *Irish Times*, 25 April 1977, 8.



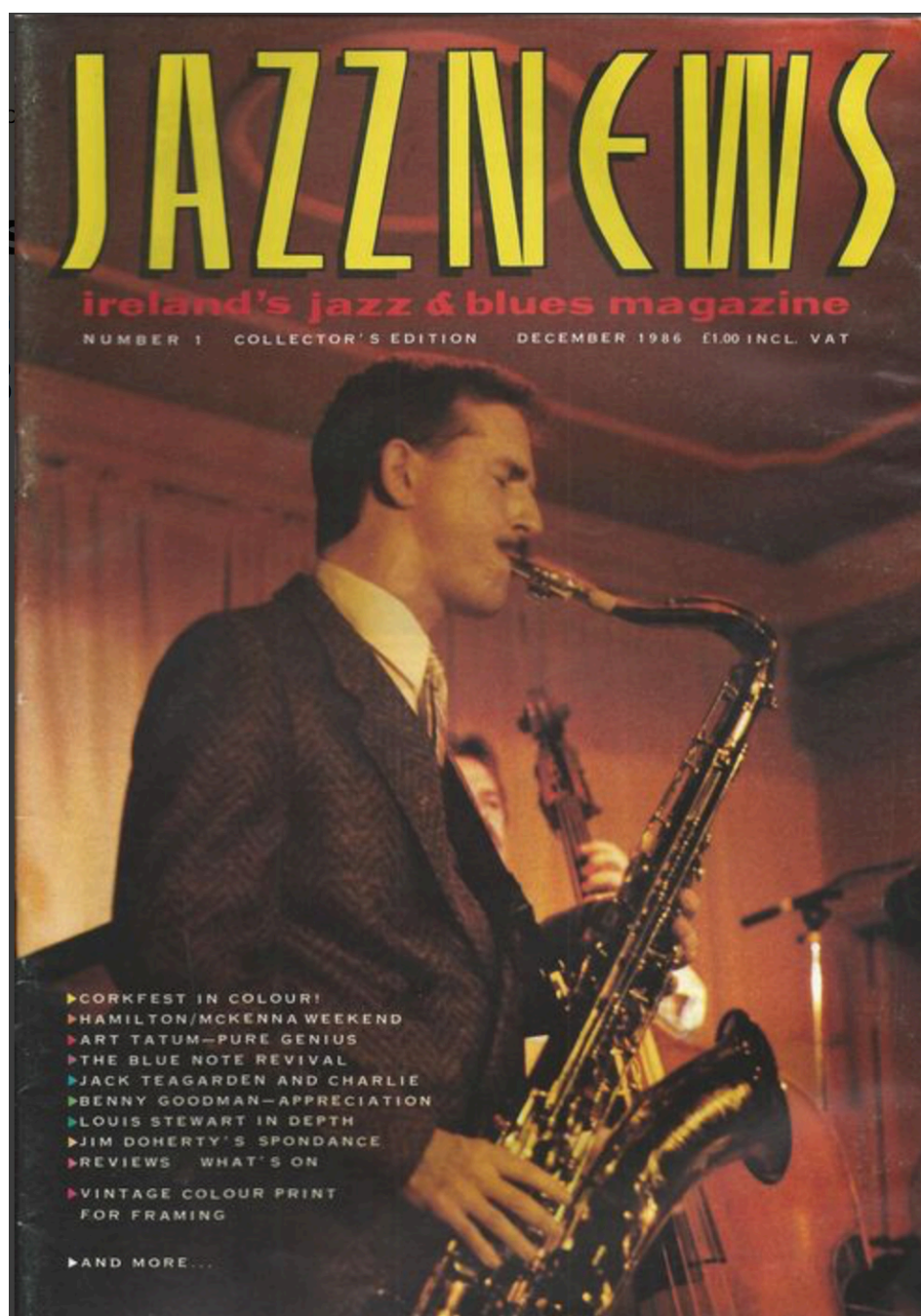


Figure 3: *Jazz News: Ireland's Jazz and Blues Magazine*, 1986

## 2.18 Newpark Music Centre

The creation of a jazz performance course by Guilfoyle in Newpark Music Centre has had a major impact on the evolution of jazz in Ireland. As remembered by Guilfoyle, he went to Newpark in 1984 to study counterpoint with Fergus Johnson. The head of the school at the time was Simon Taylor, now CEO of the National Concert Hall. Taylor was involved with the Classical Guitar Society and asked if Guilfoyle would perform a concert for them with a jazz guitar player. Although Guilfoyle suspects that they were

hoping for a concert with Louis Stewart, instead the gig was done with Tommy Halferty.<sup>204</sup> It was a success and, as Taylor drove Guilfoyle home after the concert, he asked if he thought jazz could be taught in a school.<sup>205</sup> This conversation led to the eventual setting up of the jazz department of Newpark Music Centre by Guilfoyle that would establish itself as a central part of the private music school. A more detailed discussion on Newpark and educational discourses takes place in section 4.3.

## **2.19 Promotional Agencies**

### **2.19.1 Jazz on the Terrace**

Allen Smith founded 'Jazz on the Terrace' with Gerald Davis in 1982 to put on a concert of Noel Kelehan's 'Episodes', a composition commissioned by the Gorey Arts Festival. Gerald Davis was a painter and jazz fan and friend of Louis Stewart who had helped to produce albums that Louis had recorded. Kelehan wrote the piece for Stewart and chamber orchestra (three or four reeds and three or four strings, Smith remembers), which was performed in the National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, a building for which Smith was the site architect during construction.<sup>206</sup>

The first half of the concert was a regular jazz performance with jazz standards, with Kelehan (piano), Stewart (guitar), Brian Dunning (flute), John Wadham (drums), and an American bass player who had moved to Ireland. The second half featured the chamber orchestra as well, conducted by Kelehan from the piano.<sup>207</sup>

Jazz on the Terrace continued promoting gigs, but with Allen Smith as sole promoter. His next event was 'Jazz Fusion '84', a weekend festival, again held in the National Concert Hall buildings. Smith said in an interview that his naivety was on display as he did not realise that 'Jazz Fusion' would be taken as an indicator of style rather than his intention that it be understood in a sense similar to chemical fusion, or the fusion of international artists with Irish artists. In this case, some of the fusions included saxophonist George Coleman paired with thirteen-year-old Michael Buckley (flute), eighteen-year-old Myles Drennan (piano), and scene stalwarts Jimmy McKay (bass) and Jack Daly (drums). Guitarist Tommy Halferty was joined by George Mraz (double bass) and Jim Schapperow (drums).<sup>208</sup> Other musicians playing included Tony Scott (piano),

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204 Guilfoyle interview.

205 *Ibid.*

206 Smith, Allen: Interview by author, 24 April 2014.

207 *Ibid.*

208 Hodnett, George D.: "'Jazz Fusion 84' at the NCH", *Irish Times*, 7 April 1984, 8.

Gerry Ryan (drums), Bob Whelan (vocals), Honor Heffernan (vocals), Tony Coe (saxophone), Frank Hess (double bass), Louis Stewart (guitar), Tommy Flanagan (piano), Peter Ainscough (drums), Gerry Roebuck (piano), Dave Fleming (double bass), and Len McCarthy (saxophone).<sup>209</sup>

### 2.19.2 Improvised Music Company

Following the festival, Smith remembers Ronan Guilfoyle approaching him with an idea for a new promotional organisation, one that grew out of Jazz on the Terrace but was to involve more people and take on a new name. In 1986 Smith, Guilfoyle, Smith's son, Blaise Smith, drummer and journalist Cormac Larkin, and vocalist Bob Hyland held the first meeting of the Improvised Music Company, hereafter referred to as the IMC. Smith recalls:

The motivation for Ronan was simple—it was his call—‘We should change the name from ‘Jazz on the Terrace’ to something else because jazz is too confining’, so it became the Improvised Music Company. We didn’t really change what we were doing but it did give Ronan the opportunity to play with traditional musicians and not try to make them be working for a jazz organisation. Also he was beginning to get interested—in fact I think he was for a long time—in Indian music...<sup>210</sup>

Another festival took place in 1986:

I suppose that was done by the Improvised Music Company but a committee was put together for that festival. Jazz on the Terrace sort of disappeared, I occasionally did things. A lot of the things I would have done as Jazz on the Terrace would have been very much mainstream.<sup>211</sup>

The working committee for IMC was soon reduced to just Guilfoyle and Smith, until Stephen Kindly was invited to join. Smith recalls the whole thing was very informal. Kindly worked for the *Sunday World* newspaper and travelled around Europe a lot. He would see European jazz and encourage the IMC to bring European jazz artists to Ireland. Guilfoyle is unsure of the dates but thinks that the first grant the IMC received was for around £1,500 in 1991, progressively managing to procure more funding.

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209 Hodnett, George D.: ‘More “Jazz Fusion 84” gigs’, *Irish Times*, 9 April 1984, 12.

210 Smith interview.

211 *Ibid.*

Guilfoyle recalls a turning point when the IMC produced a report for the Arts Council about the need for funding in jazz.<sup>212</sup>

In an interview with Guilfoyle, he recalls that the first jazz musician to get a grant from the Arts Council was Brian Dunning in the late 1970s, to help him study in Berklee (£1,000 in 1977). ‘Years later’ Jim Doherty obtained a grant to record in Los Angeles.<sup>213</sup> Guilfoyle suspects he was third in 1986 when he was grant-aided to study in Banff.<sup>214</sup> ‘So we’re talking about a span of maybe ten years, maybe three people got grants. [...] And I started to meet other musicians who were doing this.’ He recalls a Finnish musician explaining that the Finnish government had spent the equivalent of £7m on jazz:

I was saying, “How could you possibly justify that?” And he looked at me like I was mad, and he said, “Well, jazz is art, art is good for people and governments are supposed to look after the people, they have to pay for it.” And I was thinking, “Holy shit, hang on a second, just say that again...” It just seemed like such a mad idea, because the whole thing in Ireland was that it was elitist—it was not good, and jazz didn’t even get into the arts.<sup>215</sup>

When Guilfoyle was accepted in William Patterson College in New Jersey as an undergraduate student on the strength of a recording he had submitted, he applied for, but did not succeed in obtaining, Arts Council funding. He remembers going in to play a live audition for a panel of classical musicians, with the exception of Noel Kelehan, who they had brought in specially: ‘I had to produce scores. It was the stupidest shit, I hadn’t a hope, I honestly hadn’t a hope—all these great young opera singers and you know, and a panel full of classical people.’<sup>216</sup>

The IMC wrote a report called ‘Jazz Blues’, arguing that jazz had no chance of support under the current structure of the Arts Council, and also no hope of support from media or educational institutions. Guilfoyle says of it, ‘It really had an impact, we were called into the Arts Council to talk to them, because they love reports, this is what they understand, and from then on the organisation started to grow’.<sup>217</sup> The organisation

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212 Guilfoyle interview.

213 *Ibid.*

214 *Ibid.*

215 *Ibid.*

216 *Ibid.*

217 *Ibid.*

grew until the workload required more than volunteer staff, at which point ex-Newpark student and saxophonist Gerry Godley was employed, first on a part-time basis and then full-time. Godley presented the world music *Reels to Ragas* show on RTÉ radio up until 2014, at which point he became Principal at Leeds College of Music.

Now funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, it has described itself as a ‘not for profit organisation for jazz and jazz related music’.<sup>218</sup> The IMC has participated in a range of activities through the years, including festival programming, concert promotion, touring, recording, education, and audience development. More detailed discussion on the significant place of the IMC in the Dublin jazz scene takes place in all of the following chapters.

## **2.20 Summary**

The purpose of this overview of the Irish jazz scene is to contribute to an understanding of how jazz in Ireland has been constructed and understood, and also to correct the widely held belief that there was no jazz performance in Ireland before the late 1950s. The lack of attention paid to earlier musicians is in such contrast to other European countries that it begs the question why they have been so ignored. The writers in the early 1960s were at a much closer position to judge the relevance of earlier musicians to the scene of the time and appear to have reached the conclusion that, although not as prolific as other European capitals, jazz was important to many people within Dublin, and they demonstrated this importance through performance, societies, and clubs. Early pioneers such as Josephine Mitchell in the 1930s, or later musicians such as Tony MacDonald of the Night Owls, who studied for two years in Berklee College of Music in the 1960s and later played in big bands in New York, are virtually unheard of even in jazz circles, and are worryingly under-documented. A detailed study of the early jazz scene is beyond the remit of this study but is of urgent importance. The loss of musicians who have been part of this history is inevitable and the need to interview those still alive is pressing.

Jazz was once considered a popular music, and it could be said that all popular music has been influenced by jazz music. This movement of musical meaning has meant that the word ‘jazz’ has meant many different things to different groups over different times.

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218 Godley, Gerry: ‘Guest post: Gerry Godley on arts funding | On The Record’, *Irish Times*, (2013) <<http://www.irishtimes.com/blogs/ontherecord/2013/11/20/guest-post-gerry-godley-on-arts-funding/>> [Accessed 9 May 2014].

It is not the academic's function to decide who is correct in their usage of the term. Instead, the academic studying a historical jazz scene must attempt to analyse the important threads that run through a culture, connecting the past to the present. From the mid-1940s it becomes evident that a group of musicians were using the word jazz to describe a music that they felt was different to the dance music that they played in the dance orchestras, to the point that, although they played in dance orchestras, they had an extra session for playing 'jazz'. This does not mean that jazz did not permeate through their other music, or that there was a clear divide between 'dance' and 'jazz'. Although Hodnett puts forward (with some irony) that it was sometimes viewed as unacceptable to dance to jazz at clubs in Dublin in the 1940s, he writes as late as 1979 about 'jazz for dancing as well as listening'.<sup>219</sup> The dichotomies of listening versus dancing, art versus entertainment, often fail to hold up under scrutiny; however, the reason the arguments of binaries are so compelling is that they are easy to understand and often serve the purposes of individuals and groups by enabling the identification of a particular style or genre as being more authentic than another. To move beyond that and to understand jazz scenes, historical and contemporary, as having multiple perspectives and constructions, enables a more nuanced understanding of how jazz serves to give meaning and identity in Irish society.

This summary is not the final word on how jazz and jazz performance evolved in Ireland. Even at the final stages of writing this dissertation, the landscape of the Dublin jazz scene has been changing constantly as new musicians, promotional efforts, venues, and educational opportunities emerge and disappear. Jazz studies are only too aware that histories of music often serve the paradigm of those writing the histories, and it may be impossible to avoid this. I welcome, therefore, further attempts to clarify both the how and, more importantly, the why, of jazz performance in Ireland.

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219 Hodnett, 'Jazz: Setting the Scene', 8; Hodnett, 'Jazz Scene: Year Departed', 8.



## Chapter 3: Meaning and Identity through Performance and Participation

### 3.1 Introduction

Following on from the historical overview, this chapter moves the focus of attention to the contemporary scene and the construction of meaning and identity within it. Beginning with a discussion on the various ways identity has been dealt with by scholars, and my own usage of the concept, I discuss the potential of pathways in understanding the lived lives of scene participants. Using the theoretical frameworks of identity, pathways and ritual, I go on to investigate the construction of identity from a personal perspective, from that of identifying with and in opposition to elements of a local scene, and finally the construction of a European jazz identity.

### 3.2 Identity

Identity has been a central theme in writing about music within culture for many years. Ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice divides self-identity into two types: the concern for self-identification, presented by such questions as ‘Who am I?’; and the psychology concerning the belonging to groups or a community—collective understandings as represented through ‘shared characteristics, activities, and customs including music’, or what Stuart Hall calls ‘suturing’.<sup>1</sup> In recent literature, identity is understood as both multiple and fragmented. Rather than consisting of one essentialist self with unchanging qualities, ‘we possess multiple selves (gendered, racialized, ethnicized, nationalized, and so forth) whose expression is contingent on particular contexts and specific performances of the self in those contexts’.<sup>2</sup>

If identities are to be understood as constructed, Rice asks, who is doing the construction? Although individual agency is given credit for a certain amount of an individual’s sense of belonging, or sense of self-identity, Rice notes another line of argument coming from Michel Foucault, which speaks of ‘regimes’ and ‘discourses’ that shape the self, which in turn constructs the identity, therefore resulting identity not

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1 Rice, Timothy: ‘Reflections on music and identity in Ethnomusicology’, *Ethnomusicology*, (2007), 23; Hall, Stuart: ‘Introduction: Who Needs Identity?’, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 1–17 cited by Rice in ‘Reflections on music and identity in Ethnomusicology’, 21.

2 Rice, 27. For a more thorough post-Marxist reading of unfixed social identities expressed through multiple social positions, see also: Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal: *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, (London; New York: Verso, 2001).

being entirely created within the free will of individual agency. Rice argues that self-agency still exists at this point, however, as music is understood as both ‘a regime of self-creation (subjectification) and as a tool of resistance to those regimes’.<sup>3</sup>

Rice presents four main positions taken in ethnomusicological literature with regard to the contribution of music to the construction of identity. Pertinent to this study are the first two of those positions.<sup>4</sup> Firstly, that music gives symbolic shape to a pre-existing or emergent identity.

That symbolic shape is inherent in the structures of music and usually constitutes an iconic representation of elements of identity. Music’s temporality can be an icon of the temporal logic of identity. Moreover, music has the ability to index different aspects of multiple identities through the multiplicity of its formal properties (melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre and so forth).<sup>5</sup>

The second way in which Rice states that identity is treated concerns musical performance providing the opportunity for communities sharing an identity to see themselves in action, and to imagine others who might share the same style of performance.<sup>6</sup>

Rice’s two positions on identity will be explored in due course. It is helpful first to investigate the use of ritual and its relationship to mythology in the construction of identity. Tony Whyton argues that ritual, identity, myth, and community are integrally linked.<sup>7</sup> Not only does music create an intense feeling of belonging but it also ‘plays a key role in the way in which musicians and fans both represent themselves and are represented in society’.<sup>8</sup> Drawing from Christopher Small, Whyton discusses how rituals are processes through which individuals confirm their sense of belonging to a community.<sup>9</sup> Rituals within a jazz context are understood as more than a ceremonial display of a spiritual or supernatural belief but as having the power to help form identity

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<sup>3</sup> Rice, 28.

<sup>4</sup> The third and fourth positions are that music gives an identity its ‘feel’, and that it gives the identity a positive valance, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Rice, 35.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Whyton, Tony: *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 76. See also: Small, Christopher: *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 87–109.



and a sense of community.<sup>10</sup> In jazz, Whyton believes, recordings, language, text books, and liner notes all form part of ritualistic acts; ‘the subject’s sense of both membership and individuality is intensified through ritualistic acts of consumption’.<sup>11</sup> I extend this understanding to specifically involve the actions and interactions that occur before, after, and during a jazz performance, between musicians and between audience members. While I have discussed identity being treated in the sense of both self-identity and group belonging, Simon Frith argues that the self is always in relation to a ‘particular organization of social, physical and material forces’.<sup>12</sup> The two senses are inseparable and it is here that music can be a powerful force in creating an experience that only makes sense by ‘*taking on* both a subjective and collective identity’ (italics in original).<sup>13</sup> For Frith, music and identity both construct and describe, and the two are inseparable. Identity is a verb, not a noun, and participation in music making is best understood as an experience of this in action, in what Frith calls ‘*self-in-process*’ (italics in original).<sup>14</sup>

Using an understanding of identity construction informed by Rice and Frith, and drawing on Whyton’s use of ritual and mythology in the construction of identity, I will now look at three different areas where it may be applied: firstly, the choosing of ‘jazz musician’ as an identity; secondly, the way in which musicians further refine their identity within the overarching ‘jazz musician’ category; and, finally, the concept of a European identity, and how Irish jazz musicians negotiate with that conception. In this way, I will explore the relationship of a jazz identity from the individual, through to the local, and finally out to a European context. The different locations of identity construction are not disconnected, of course, but are highly interconnected, as will be demonstrated.

### 3.3 Pathways

In *Hidden Musicians* (1989), Ruth Finnegan introduced a conception of pathways that she used to analyse the metaphorical journey musicians traverse in order to negotiate the learning and performance of their musics.<sup>15</sup> Of particular interest to Finnegan were the

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<sup>10</sup> Whyton, 77.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 77–78.

<sup>12</sup> Frith, Simon: ‘Music and Identity’, in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (London; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 110.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 109–110.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>15</sup> Finnegan, Ruth: *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town*, Reprint (Wesleyan University Press, 1989).

pathways of amateur musicians, but the concept applies equally to musicians anywhere along the amateur-to-professional spectrum. While no two musicians' pathways are identical, they often cross over each other. A pathway can be made by one musician and followed partly or fully by others. Individuals' paths can connect before splitting and pursuing other directions, possibly reconnecting at a later time.

Finnegan makes useful observations, acknowledging the hereditary connection to musical involvement (see section 3.7), and the role of pathways in 'providing meaning for personal action and identity.'<sup>16</sup> Borrowing from urban studies, Finnegan explores the usefulness of pathways to understand the importance of music in participant's lives.<sup>17</sup> That local musical pathways are journeys that have at least in part been travelled previously by participants sharing musical values, gives the sense of taking part in an activity with highly regarded others. As the following sections show, pathways in the Dublin jazz scene also serve to differentiate musicians from other musicians within the scene, identifying them more closely to one sub-scene than another.

Pathways are useful for highlighting scene participants' 'collective and active practice on the ground', as Finnegan puts it, or (to use a phrase I often refer to throughout this text) their day-to-day activity.<sup>18</sup> While the metaphorical journeys of musicians to arrive at their present position within a scene are often ignored or taken for granted, the concept of pathways acknowledges the hundreds and more often thousands of hours that have been invested into that position. Pathways simultaneously recognise that while the chosen route is an expression of individual freedom, by their very nature, pathways are also restricted by both the physical and metaphysical landscape on which they take place.

Travis Jackson notes the influence of African American musics and cultural practices to individuals' pathways.<sup>19</sup> Jackson uses Finnegan's concept as a point of departure when demonstrating how the varied pathways of the five prominent jazz musicians he investigated all 'stressed the importance of various African American musics and cultural practices in their education and experience as jazz artists'.<sup>20</sup> He puts to the forefront the engagement with African American musics that the musicians have

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<sup>16</sup> Finnegan, 307.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 305–311.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.

<sup>19</sup> Jackson, 44.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

experienced through their pathway to becoming a professional jazz musician, an observation not dissimilar to my own, regarding my interviews with jazz musicians. I noted that while musicians rarely specifically mentioned race or ethnicity unless prompted, their examples of early musical influences were very often dominated by African American musics, with their observations often including African American cultural practices.<sup>21</sup>

The pathways followed by musicians within the Dublin jazz scene vary from one to another, not only due to differences experienced within Ireland, but also due to the presence of many musicians from outside Ireland. One such musician, Italian Julien Colarossi, started playing piano at the age of ten before leaving music two years later until at the age of sixteen he found a guitar in his uncle's attic. He enrolled in the four-year full-time Bachelor of Arts Jazz Performance programme at Newpark Music Centre in September 2009 at age nineteen. Like many other non-Irish musicians, Colarossi found the course to be an attractive further educational option, particularly due to its connection with Berklee College of Music and the fact that it was English speaking. After staying at his uncle's house for two months, he moved in with fellow students near Newpark. His housemates were a year ahead in Newpark and started to play him music and give him recordings to listen to. The first recording they gave him was John Coltrane's seminal 1960 album *Giant Steps* and, as he recalls, 'I hated it, I was like, what the hell is this. They were all just getting into jazz themselves, you know, but they're trying to be hip and just listen to the hip records, you know. So that was the first recording I listened... heard, and I really didn't like it.'<sup>22</sup>

The 'seminal moment' of 'getting it' came later for Colarossi: 'I remember the turning point was probably when I heard [sic] a Coltrane video of 'Alabama'. Do you know that video on YouTube?'<sup>23</sup> When asked what it was about that video, Colarossi said:

It was the soul of the thing, you know... What I was doing was all based on blues and things, but it was all based on just soul and, you know, like spiritual kind of thing. I had a very spiritual approach to music when I first started playing. But I couldn't see the connection

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21 The navigation of pathways can also be used to conceptualise the process of improvisation as demonstrated by Vijay Iyer in his article on the American Composers Orchestra website. See: Iyer, Vijay: 'Navigation Through Form—Composing for Improvisers', American Composers, (2004) <[http://www.americancomposers.org/improvise/iyer\\_essay.htm](http://www.americancomposers.org/improvise/iyer_essay.htm)> [Accessed 16 August 2013].

22 Colarossi, Julien: Interview by author, 2 November 2014.

23 *Ibid.*; John Coltrane Alabama Jazz Casual, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc4Y8YaDFTE>> [Accessed 7 September 2015].

when I heard *Giant Steps*. I thought, “Fuck, how can you relate to people or express anything with this?”<sup>24</sup>

Colarossi now identifies as a jazz musician, ‘I used not to refer to myself, now I do and I love that. If they ask me what I am, I am a jazz musician. I know now that I am.’<sup>25</sup>

The above anecdote describes Colarossi’s journey from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ in the jazz world; it is a type of story common to many musicians with whom I spoke. For Colarossi, his initial negative reaction to John Coltrane gave way over time to a relationship with the mythology of jazz, one example being an understanding of jazz practice as a ‘spiritual kind of thing’ through the mediation of, amongst other things, an online video of John Coltrane.

Colarossi’s time studying could be considered fairly typical for many studying jazz. Regardless of whether students share a house with other jazz students, each day contains numerous ritualistic activities engaging with the mythology of jazz. These activities are mediated through recordings, posters, videos and perhaps most importantly, interactions with the jazz community, in Colarossi’s case represented by the teachers, students, and visitors at Newpark Music Centre.

This ritualistic consumption of an icon instilled with mythology and meaning in the jazz narrative demonstrates what Small describes as identities being constructed through ritual. Small states that this can be done in three ways: as affirmation, celebration, and exploration.<sup>26</sup> Through the ritual of listening to and sharing jazz recordings, jazz musicians are participating in the construction of their identity—with Colarossi moving from exploration (and rejection of an identity) to affirmation and celebration. In *Beyond a Love Supreme*, Tony Whyton argues that jazz recordings are more than ‘sonic documents’ that capture music, being in his view ‘powerful artefacts that can affect people’s lives, inspire future generations, and act as a beacon for social change’.<sup>27</sup> He goes on to state: ‘As symbols, recordings can come to stand for a whole host of cultural values and mythologies’.<sup>28</sup> John Coltrane is a perfect example of this as he stands as a symbol of spirituality in jazz. As Whyton observes, he is often viewed ‘as the conduit

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<sup>24</sup> Colarossi interview.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Small, 95; Whyton, *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, 76.

<sup>27</sup> Whyton, Tony: *Beyond A Love Supreme: John Coltrane and the legacy of an album*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

for divine inspiration, separated from the everyday world, as opposed to a musician working within specific social conditions and an ever-changing political discourse'.<sup>29</sup>

Colarossi's transformation to identifying as 'a jazz musician' did not occur with a single interaction with a Coltrane recording, although many musicians share the 'epiphany' moment of when a recording had a monumental impact on them. Instead, the exploration, construction, affirmation and celebration of identity occurred through the day-to-day life of studying jazz, living with jazz musicians, practising, performing, and listening. The moment of 'getting it' is often expressed, however, through a seminal listening experience where an epiphany occurs for the jazz fan. I would argue that most of these seminal moments occur after a period of exposure to the mythology of jazz mediated through contemporary culture. Colarossi stated that in Italy:

I'd never heard jazz before, ever, cos where I live there's not even a chance to hear jazz. Nobody knows who Miles Davis is, nobody knows who John Coltrane is, nothing. So I'd never heard a jazz track in my life, and I didn't even acknowledge the existence of it, you know. Even when you're watching a movie and there's a jazz track on the score, I wouldn't even acknowledge, "Oh, that's jazz", I didn't know. I was completely ignorant.<sup>30</sup>

While it is possible to go through to adulthood without any knowledge of what jazz is, it is still the case that, from the time of Colarossi's exposure to the music, his reception of it would have been mediated through a series of signs and signifiers that began to create meaning. By the time of his 'turning point', Colarossi had learnt of the spiritual significance of Coltrane and was able to 'hear' that in the music. With the embrace of the identity of a 'jazz musician', Colarossi is identifying not just with the sonic documents of jazz performance but with ideals and values represented through the mediation of those documents.

### **3.4 A Personal Identity within the Scene**

Moving outward toward identity based around a scene or locality—an identity as a jazz musician in the Dublin scene—I will now investigate constructions of identity within the jazz community using a pre-gig set-up as a case study. This gig involved four people, including me, who, although having played together in different combinations many times, had never played together in this particular combination before.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>30</sup> Colarossi interview.

Returning to an idea of jazz participation as ritualistic activity, the following case study activity can all be understood as ritual. Using Whyton's framework of jazz functioning in relation to a jazz mythology, I place this pre-gig ritualistic activity as a space where musicians both engage with the jazz mythology and also create their own space within it, either to confirm or contest dominant ideologies.<sup>31</sup>

Although the specifics change every time, the process of setting up consists of similar activities, activities shared with the jazz communities and jazz icons throughout the history of the music. Arriving at the gig, taking the instruments out of cases and setting them up, greeting band members, bar workers, and audience members, warming up instruments, deciding on repertoire and styles, tuning up, getting drinks, and eventually starting the gig are all activities that occur in some way at almost all performances. Exchanges and events that are not common stand out as markers of meaning within the context of ritualised activity.

My relationship with this band was not unusual. Out of the four musicians, the drummer and I had played together most, and the drummer was part of my own trio at the time, and although it was not gigging regularly, we would have played together weekly at least. The rest of the musicians played together very rarely. Despite this, in some sense we would have considered each other as friends and as coming from the same community. Other participants in my study described how being immersed in the jazz community led to their sense of self-worth being only in relation to their activity within that community. Therefore, if a musician is not gigging, not 'on the scene', or 'out there doing it', then their sense of self-worth, or the connection between their identity as a jazz musician and their day-to-day activity, is not in sync. This can obviously be a cause of distress.

At this particular gig that took place in November 2012, the gig was due to begin at 9:30pm and the guitarist and I arrived at 8:45pm. The guitarist expressed pleasure that he was not the only one here—possibly concerned that he might have been there by himself until much later, knowing that the gig often starts late. In the following twenty minutes I parked my car and discussed stage configuration with the drummer, who is responsible for the gig, on the telephone. Despite having played the venue many times in the past, there is no consistent way that we set up the instruments; it is negotiated

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31 Whyton, *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*.

each time. As discussed later in section 4.2.4, the International Bar has a stage that can be placed up or down. The management put it in so that audience members could access the men's toilet, but it has the effect of decreasing the space available, because instruments must be either on or off the stage and the stage only fits two instruments, usually. The drummer tells me that he always sets up the stage 'these days' with drums and bass on the stage and other instruments in front as it worked well for communication and sound and also allowed use of the toilets. I felt slightly uncomfortable with this conversation and then guilty for feeling slightly annoyed. Even though the drummer was a good friend and not someone I would ever describe as being interested in power, I felt tension, and was unsure of where it was coming from, aware that it could be only me feeling the tension and not wanting this to be the starting point of what I wanted to be an enjoyable gig. Although rarely mentioned, these 'micro-tensions' are a common occurrence, and are not compatible with the idea of jazz performance as a utopian space. In fact, these minor contestations and negotiations are an inherent part of jazz performance. That they rarely escalate into larger arguments demonstrates how contemporary jazz musicians must usually be adaptable and flexible in order to work in the wide range of musical situations they find themselves in.

When I arrived back at the venue, the drummer had been in touch with the guitarist, who was now setting up in front of the stage. The saxophonist duly arrived and we shook hands and said 'hi': we were meeting for only the second time. I asked the guitarist and saxophonist if they minded if I record the gig: the guitarist said 'yes', in what I took to be a mock angry tone, and I presumed that he meant that no, he didn't mind. The saxophonist then checked the spelling of our names as he posted a Facebook update about our gig, which was due to start in twenty minutes.

The above description is enacted countless times across the world at gigs of all genres. What is different about how it occurs at a jazz gig in Dublin and what does that tell us about how jazz works as a social phenomenon? Firstly, the rituals as they occur within a scene deal with the local: they reference local events, local concerns, and local community members. In addition to this they place the local within the context of the global and the mythological. Holly Kruse suggests that the relationship of scenes to identity is important because of the way they are identified with specific geographical and physical spaces. Geographic boundaries, networks of social relationships, senses of

local history, and opposition to other localities all contribute to the identity formation, change, and maintenance.<sup>32</sup>

A good example of how musicians get to know each other is the interaction I had with Chris Engles, the saxophonist, during setting up. He told me, ‘I didn’t bring any of my tunes just because, they are not so simple’. We spent some time getting to know each other a little better, having met for the first time only a week before, at a corporate gig for a rugby match. Chris is a black South African and the rugby match was Ireland versus South Africa. That same gig had also been the first time I had met promoter Dominic Reilly, who organised the gig. ‘Strange in life how some things happen, I’ve been living here for a year, never played with you before and now I’ve played with you twice in a week,’ Chris said to me, and we went on to discuss the different gigs that we had been doing.

After telling Chris that I was not playing many Tuesdays in the International Bar as I was busy with my PhD and other projects—thereby letting him know that I ‘was busy’—he replied:

I don’t normally do Tuesdays either. I haven’t done a Tuesday in ages. I do Thursdays, every month or month and a half, maybe once every two months with (someone), and I’ve done maybe two gigs here with Cote’s band, two gigs with Julien’s band, but really it’s not a gig I do very often, not Tuesdays; Thursdays, I’ve done a couple of them. I don’t remember the last time I played a Tuesday.

Although this interaction could be dismissed as simply ‘getting to know you’ discussion, I believe it serves an important purpose within jazz performance, enabling participants to engage with the jazz narrative and mythology. In addition to allowing us both to locate each other within the scene, finding out with whom we are playing with, how in demand we are, and the type of gigs we are playing, we were also appraising each other’s values both musically and socially.

Interestingly, neither of us mentioned any of our corporate gigs, even though we had met on a corporate gig the week before, and had doubtless played others around that time. The corporate world is seen as separate from the jazz scene, although it can consist of the same people and repertoire. While we are in the International Bar, we are

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32 Kruse, Holly: ‘Local Identity and Independent Music Scenes, Online and Off’, *Popular Music and Society*, 33, (2010), 628.



performing for ‘the love of it’, or ‘just to play’, not particularly for financial gain. This gives more credence and symbolic capital to the gig in the International when compared to the very similar (more lucrative) gig we played a week earlier for a corporate audience.

The audience could be considered a key factor in understanding the difference between the corporate and the jazz settings. With the exchange of money involved in a corporate gig, a contract is entered into, even if unwritten, that places the employee in a position of power. The band is relegated to hired help who must entertain, yet not get in the way. The audience is there to be entertained and it is they who have access to finger food and drinks. In the International Bar, the band gets one or two free drinks (at the discretion of the bartender) and also a free toasted sandwich. The band is clearly there to be listened to and admired. The audience is still hoping to be entertained but it is a different social contract, one in which the musicians have at least equal status to the audience, if not more. If the crowd is noisy between tunes, the band can make an appeal for silence so they can announce the next piece. The ability to maintain a listening environment is part of the social contract between audience and band members. An audience that listens and shows an interest is often thanked and always appreciated. A band that delivers something of interest for the audience to listen to is likewise shown appreciation in the form of applause and cheers.

Returning to the pre-gig discussions, they not only locate participants within a scene but also set out musical tastes and preferences, approaches to playing, and preferred styles. On this particular night, throughout all the conversations, musical utterances were being made, each a conscious decision. In this case, the saxophonist warming up his instrument by playing high notes and ‘wails’ and the guitarist running scales up and down are indexing different musical, and arguably, societal values. Although the interpretation is made by the receiver (or interpretant), the sign from the scale player may be that scales are an important part of their practice routine and that value is given to be able to play fluently and with ease, whereas one may interpret the former player as valuing expression and freedom. Depending on the interpretant, running scales may be a symbol of virtuosity and skill, or inversely it may be a symbol of a lack of creativity and imagination. Of course, I am outlining a false binary here—that of intellect versus emotion, or technicality versus expression—but I am using the simplest example. The

actual symbol and interpretation is entirely dependent on the situation and on the life experience or the *habitus* of the interpreter.

To explore this idea (the indexical qualities of jazz) further, musical utterances perform a constant indexing to a performer's musical past and present. A saxophonist's choice between a Coltrane-esque 'wail' or a fat, fluffy tone indicates a conscious decision, a chosen preference, either temporary or permanent, not only between the two sounds, but from a spectrum of possible sounds. The final sound produced is a sign of not only the amount of time the musician has put into working on producing the sound, but also the choices they have made throughout their musical life on what sort of a sound to focus on. This in turn indexes possible aesthetic and stylistic choices, which can be read by a listener within a framework of tacit and non-tacit knowledge.

Similarly, a keyboardist's choice of piano or synth sound or a guitarist's choice of a clichéd ending in a jazz standard from the American songbook all provide reference points for musicians in the band and for the audience. The reaction to each choice, the response from other musicians, and the ability to follow an indexical chain through multiple variants further consolidates or confuses a sense of cohesion or lack of it. The ability of music to index is not lost on the audience member. One jazz fan related:

[You have the] more sort of new confident sort of players, you know, out there, that sorta just, they don't need the big guys anymore, the older, you know, cos they just kinda go, right, you know, we just play, and they do, and they just, you know, they've just got that new fresh sort of sound to it. They're doing the new sorta trip song, which is great.<sup>34</sup>

Although this listener is not using concise musical terms to describe what he is hearing, he is still acknowledging a contrast in attitude and sound between two groups of performers. The meaning being constructed (by the listener in this case) through the mediation of the live performance is not just of a 'new fresh sort of sound' but of a 'new confident sort of player(s)'.

### **3.5 Engaging with a Wider Dublin Scene**

Moving outward, and considering Rice's second position concerning musical performance providing the opportunity for communities sharing an identity to see themselves in action, I would like to discuss the shared sense of identity that a jazz

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34 Bent, Roland: Interview by author, 30 April 2013.

musician performing in a small bar in Dublin feels with, say, a New York performer in a similar venue. They have likely both watched performances of musicians they admire online, playing in a similar sized room, with the audience seated in the same intimate, close atmosphere. Similarly, the once-a-week big band musician, a Sinatra-style singer, or a player in any other sub-genre of jazz can feel a kinship when seeing or hearing music that shares the same values as their own, performed either live or via another medium. As musicians and audiences begin to explore jazz as a genre, their relationship with the music is mediated through recordings, texts, photography, and the spaces through which they encounter jazz. As this relationship deepens and becomes more nuanced, their understanding of what ‘jazz’ means to them changes as does their own sense of belonging to a community. While an understanding of jazz as a broad genre may still exist, musicians usually identify more closely with certain aspects of the music, or music that represents their values. This way of music creating identity by providing opportunities for communities to see themselves in action can only exist through those same communities recognising the indexical qualities shared in performance styles. It is also an identity that goes beyond the local and creates an understanding of a global community.

Musicians are constantly engaging in this shared identity through their engagement with the jazz mythology, the ‘idea’ of being a jazz musician that exists through every expression of the idea. To bring my own experience into the research, I recall looking up ‘jazz’ in my family’s encyclopaedia collection, and the part I remember was that many jazz musicians were described as having participated in a drug-taking lifestyle. This initial impression was later added to by numerous books and movies that presented jazz as an ‘on the edge’ lifestyle. My early impressions of jazz were strongly influenced by a conception of jazz as slightly dangerous, rebellious and anti-establishment; a conception that was probably not devoid of racial fetishism. Another participant recalls the aura of mystery surrounding a ‘jazz musician’ who played in their church, and how that created a ‘fantasy’ surrounding their conception of jazz.

Many of the above interactions concern the relationships between musicians. Musicians’ relationships within a scene are complex. Due to the amount of time often dedicated to the music, a musician’s closer circle of friends and acquaintances can often be largely restricted to other musicians, especially in the case of foreign musicians who did not grow up in Ireland and who, therefore, have none of the school friends or family

connections. Even for those who grew up in Ireland, the combination of working weekends and in the evenings can often lead to a situation where other musicians start to make up the majority of their social circle.

For younger musicians, especially those studying in Newpark, this results in close networks of friends who play music together, and a wider circle of friends who may play music together infrequently or not at all and only know each other through attending gigs. For some older musicians, this can result in a situation where most of their ‘friends’ are musicians, but in fact the close bonding that ‘friends’ normally participate in has not taken place. The line between friend and acquaintance is often not clear within jazz scenes. In some senses, the intimacy of a close friendship can occur while travelling to gigs, waiting in dressing rooms, or eating together, yet some musicians expressed the feeling that while this sometimes carried over to a strong friendship, other times it did not and the relationships remained at a distance, or unclear. For most musicians, especially older musicians, the majority of social activity takes place at gigs or rehearsals, and the ‘hang’ can occur less frequently.<sup>35</sup>

Participation in jazz as a musician means interaction with other musicians. Relationships were of central importance to the musicians I spoke to in regard to making music. It is through relationships that participants identify with a larger jazz community, or the scene. Take Colarossi’s explanation of the importance of people:

For me to make sense of what I’m doing, I need to have somebody close by that I feel supported from, I feel the enthusiasm from, I feel inspired from. Certainly, that’s always been the biggest boost, and at times I’ve felt like leaving from here because of certain things that have happened with people, so I’d say that influences me strongly. All the decisions I make are based on that thing. [...] The reason why I’m doing what I’m doing is cos I wanna play with these people and they make me happy and I find that it’s the most important thing.<sup>36</sup>

Singer Edel Meade also highlighted the importance of relationships: ‘[I]t’s so crucial that you have a really good working relationship with the people that you play with, that they respect you, that they understand what you’re trying to achieve perhaps, if you are trying to achieve something on a deep artistic level.’<sup>37</sup> Meade also highlighted that, for

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35 ‘Hanging’ is a term often used in jazz cultures for socialising.

36 Colarossi interview.

37 Meade, Edel: Interview by author, 29 May 2013.

many musicians, a musical relationship involves elements that are outside direct ‘musical aspects’:

[E]ven stuff like, you know, that they arrive on time, that they dress in a professional manner for the gig, that they treat audience members with respect. These things are absolutely crucial for me and they’re not seen as skills that are seen as important for a lot of the musicians here, which I think is unfortunate. But, for me, the biggest, the most important thing is the music and getting it out there and engaging with as many people as possible. Jazz is not some exclusive art form and I feel that all these other factors are important in engaging as many people as possible, so I really only want to work with musicians that have this mind-set.<sup>38</sup>

John Moriarty focused on the issue of musical trust in a relationship. Speaking of working in a duo with Louis Stewart, he said ‘it took a while to get to that stage where you can feel relaxed enough that you can kind of fly off [and] know that somebody’s going to be there for you. And I think that if you’re there for somebody musically on the bandstand, I think that also translates to personal relationships you know—well up to a point, you know.’<sup>39</sup> To illustrate when that trust is not established, Moriarty mentioned occasions when, musically, things were not good on the bandstand and ‘it was so bad that I almost took it personally, it almost changed my sort of feelings about that person. That’s terrible, isn’t it? [laughs].’<sup>40</sup>

That personal and musical relationships are not separable can cause issues for musicians within a scene. Darragh O’Kelly stated: ‘It’s hard to not feel slightly embittered when, you know, you feel like you’ve kinda been fucked over, you know. Like, it can happen quite often.’<sup>41</sup> One method to attempt to reduce the strain on friendships when changing a band line up, O’Kelly observed, was ‘if they’re the person who’s pushing it, they’ll try and let them cool the project down, until it kinda subsides and then it just disappears, then wait a kinda a little, sufficient length of time and then sorta reform it, slightly, with a slightly different rejigged line up’.<sup>42</sup> O’Kelly works in a number of genres and states: ‘I find jazz musicians to be quite brutal. You wouldn’t exactly describe most of them as fiercely loyal.’<sup>43</sup>

Ronan Guilfoyle finds the negotiation of business and friendships to be a simpler affair:

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Moriarty, John: Interview by author, 26 August 2013.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> O’Kelly, Darragh: Interview by author, 28 June 2013.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

I would describe myself in my own dealing with the music as fairly ruthless, in that I don't play with people that in my opinion do not fulfil the criteria that I'm talking about, and if they're flakey, they may fulfil the earlier criteria, but if they're flakey, I just can't deal with it.<sup>44</sup>

For Guilfoyle, the professional side is a must when planning musical projects:

It's hard enough to make it work anyway without the additional stress of wondering whether a guy's gonna turn up and whether he knows the music, so for me it's about protecting myself in a way. I'm quite ruthless about that, in that I feel I have to do what I have to do in order to create the music that I want to create and whatever I have to do, I have to do, and I'm sorry if this guy's a nice guy, I just can't deal with it, it's just not possible to deal with it. And if somebody does something, what I would consider unprofessional, I never call them again, never.<sup>45</sup>

Relationships are central to the workings of a scene. As Italian pianist Francesco Turrisi said:

It's interesting because there is a mutual understanding of what you're giving to the project and the energy you're willing to invest, even when there is no money, just for the music. And, you know, it's like a human relationship as well, with friends. It's tricky—you can't do it with everybody you know.<sup>46</sup>

In a scene like the Dublin scene, the limited number of players also impacts the way bands form and the relationships that occur. Turrisi felt frustration when he first came to Ireland because of the lack of musicians who shared an interest in other styles of music, such as Iranian and Turkish classical music:

I got really frustrated because I wanted to do all these things and there was nobody, the same with jazz [...] So you felt like sometimes you had some ideas and you couldn't really do it because there were no musicians that you wanted, so then I kind of came around it by trying to find the people that I really liked musically and trying to work with them, even though maybe they weren't the instrument I was thinking of.<sup>47</sup>

Whyton writes that 'the belief in jazz community enables musicians and audiences to feel part of a unique club, including the celebration of collective identities or that

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44 Guilfoyle interview.

45 *Ibid.*

46 Turrisi, Francesco: Interview by author, 5 July 2014.

47 *Ibid.*

affirmation of tastes in the celebration of canonical artists and their works'.<sup>48</sup> The rituals that take place in the jazz community also often serve to promote authorship, authority, and authenticity and the belief in mythological grand narratives of jazz history.<sup>49</sup> The student house Colarossi lived in identified itself as 'the jazz house', establishing mock 'jazz house rules' based upon the movie *Fight Club* and using the name on social media sites for parties and jam sessions. In doing so, they created a group identity for themselves that shared values with jazz mythology and promoted certain behaviour, such as a high level of commitment to studying their instruments. For the jazz house, these values were further cultivated by their daily engagement with Newpark Music Centre and the musicians who taught there.

While the importance of relationships was consistently attested to by everybody I interviewed, it was not always in relation to a jazz scene that musicians identified; in fact, many musicians actively avoided being pigeonholed into one scene:

[I]t can be contradictory because I certainly advertise, like I teach a jazz singing workshop, for example, so, you know, people then come to me and expect me to be a jazz singer. I guess what's important for me is to be seen as a creative singer and, for me, jazz is more about a mentality or an approach. So what I mean is, I might take a song by someone like Jimi Hendrix or Carole King and do something creative with it, and that's me applying a jazz approach. But I don't like the label jazz singer because I think that people who don't know a huge amount about music automatically jump to the conclusion that you're singing Ella Fitzgerald songs or Peggy Lee and, for me, I feel that I do so much more than that. And I'm an arranger and a composer as well, and I don't feel that, I feel that that's very limiting, so I would try and avoid it if possible. But, similarly, I'm not going to turn down gigs at jazz festivals either, so it is um...<sup>50</sup>

Other musicians felt happy with a jazz tag but recognised that accepting such a label may have consequences: 'I'm pretty much a straight-ahead player—but that could have negative connotation depending on which grant you're applying for.'<sup>51</sup> Similarly, although considering himself a part of the jazz scene, Patrick Groenland stated: 'I don't really consider myself a jazz musician. A lot of my turmoil came from doing just that. By doing that you're limiting yourself, unless you're working with a pool of people,

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48 Whyton, *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, 58

49 *Ibid.*, 58.

50 Meade interview.

51 Moriarty interview.



unless you're like in a city with a hub of jazz people, unless that's happening regularly, you can't go it alone.'<sup>52</sup>

Personal interactions are the location of a lot of identity forming experiences for participants in the Dublin jazz scene. Although we form a personal identity, that identity is always in relation to what we know around us. Through jazz performance, participants literally perform their identity, both in musical and non-musical interactions. Being part of the jazz scene means not only belonging to a community involved with jazz, but also identifying within that scene, participants with whom values and ideologies are shared, even if that means a rejection of the label 'jazz'.

### 3.6 Gender

I am cognitive of the fact that gender is rarely addressed within this study. Like race, I expected gender to feature significantly within the ethnographic findings, however, what was most telling in writing up the data was how something so primary to our experience of scenes was hidden within our *habitus*. Like many other fields, such as politics and science, jazz is largely blind to its own gender bias. In regular weekly jazz gigs around Dublin, women musicians are largely absent. The exception is in the role as vocalist, in which women outnumber men significantly. The ratio of women to men students at Newpark Music Centre is much closer to parity than for musicians working within the scene.

My own bias about who makes up the scene displayed itself in my selection of interviewees. Out of the thirty people I interviewed, only five were women. I did speak to many women informally who also informed my own knowledge of their experience. While I expected strong reactions from the women I spoke to concerning gender and the jazz scene, I was often told that it was not a defining aspect of their participation. In jazz performance, for them, it was the music that was of primary importance in creating a meaningful experience.

My own experience of the Dublin jazz scene is that of an extremely male-dominant environment. Casual objectification of women is common and male-centric language would not be rare in the performance environment, such as 'getting your balls out'. While this behaviour is intermittent and is tempered around women and strangers, it

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52 Groenland, Patrick: Interview by author, 3 March 2014.

none the less speaks of an environment, reflecting wider society, in which the accepted norm is white, heterosexual male.

One woman I spoke to had been assigned male gender at birth. When I spoke to her about how some women had expressed that the role of gender in the jazz scene was not significant, she opined that just as I was unaware of any way of experiencing the world other than as a white male, so women's experience of the scene is the only viewpoint available to them, and as such, how people experience society, irrespective of gender, always seems 'normal'.<sup>53</sup> This participant however, had participated in the jazz scene while outwardly identifying as both male and female, and had experienced both situations as being considerably different from one another. She recalled to me that at her first public appearance as a female musician she experienced strong feelings of how it was different:

It's very, very difficult for a woman to stand on stage, and I'll tell you one thing that was striking, this was in... June, it was the first concert where I was publicly presenting as a woman, and I walked into the room, it was in the [the venue] and it was jam packed full of people and I got an immediate sense, and this was a band that I played with regularly, and this sense was not from the band, it was from the audience, it was an immediate sense that I was the token chick in the band. And I've had that sense a lot of times since, like being trans you notice the world from two very different situations and it's much easier to garner immediate respect as a man than it is to garner immediate respect as a woman. If you walk into a space with a musical instrument as a woman, you're viewed immediately as somebody who's just there because they're a chick, and obviously enough, because I can play [an instrument], because I know how to do that, and I noticed that the compliments for playing well during a concert were much more when I was presenting as a woman than as a man, and as much as you can read that as that people were being nice and people were saying it's good, what people were actually saying, in a round-about way was like, that's really good, even a girl can do that, and that's something that really should be looked at at some point. Trans people get to see things from two very different spaces whereas people who don't transition don't have the foggiest idea what it's like.<sup>54</sup>

Women have participated in jazz in Ireland since its arrival, however, reflecting society as a whole, they are often relegated to the margins, both in historical reporting and contemporary participation. The seminal book of gender in jazz studies *Big Ears* (2008) argues for the inclusion of the everyday in jazz studies, in particular a consideration of

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<sup>53</sup> Anonymised interview.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

the ‘cooperative relationships between male jazz musicians and their wives’, many of whom came to participate in jazz prior to meeting the men who would cause them to be defined as ‘jazz wives’.<sup>55</sup> The editors go on to encourage a re-listening of oral histories for ‘the treatment of the everyday in which musicians are not always men, and not always isolated from family and communities’.<sup>56</sup>

The question of why there are not more women involved in the jazz culture of the Dublin jazz scene is one that pianist/saxophonist Carole Nelson feels needs to be asked. When I suggested that it reflected other male dominated cultures such as politics or business, Nelson pointed out the contrast with the traditional Irish scene where there are many more women participating. ‘It’s [the traditional Irish scene] competitive as well, but there is a huge amount of support for people to come in, people start young. Jazz is a different planet. If we’re looking at a culture that is about pubs, late nights, there’s really no difference. Drinking culture ditto.’<sup>57</sup>

While my study has not focused on women in the Dublin jazz scene, it is important to recognise that women’s participation goes far beyond being ‘jazz wives’. Ingrid Monson asks:

[W]hy is it so difficult for women to get any respect in jazz? Why despite its celebration of human freedom and communal solidarity does the jazz community more often mention women (especially horn players) as objects of ridicule rather than celebration, even when they equal or surpass their male colleagues in musical erudition?<sup>58</sup>

My experience of the Dublin jazz scene is that of a white heterosexual male. I have largely been unaware of the privileges that come with that identity. The women I spoke to all had individual perspectives on the jazz scene and the part of women within it, as would be expected. While this study does not tackle ‘gender’ or indeed ‘sexuality’, it is simply an injustice to relegate the issue of gender to the ‘unimportant’ and ‘unmentioned’ pile, even when the primacy of ‘the music’ is stressed by all participants. I would like to acknowledge the multitude of voices within the Dublin jazz scene regarding both gender and sexual orientation.

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55 Rustin, Nichole T. & Tucker, Sherrie eds.: *Big Ears*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008), 12-13.

56 *Ibid.*

57 Nelson, Carole: Telephone interview by author, 25 August 2015.

58 Monson, Ingrid: ‘Fitting the Part’ in *Big Ears*, eds. Nichole T. Rustin & Sherrie Tucker, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008).

### 3.7 Local Heroes

Beyond immediate associates, participants' experience of the Dublin jazz scene is also mediated through iconic musicians within the scene. In interviews, musicians often noted the existence of Dublin jazz 'dynasties', including the Buckleys (Richie and Michael, their father Dick and cousin Hugh) and the Guilfoyles (Ronan and Conor, and now possibly including Ronan's son Chris).<sup>59</sup> Almost without exception, however, musicians mentioned Louis Stewart as part of a seminal Dublin jazz scene experience. Patrick Groenland remembers going to see Stewart on Grafton Street, where he had a residency for many years:

That was pretty interesting [...] My lasting image is of him playing these really close chord voicings and really blowing my mind and that was the main aspect and I was, like, I have to find out how to do that, at some point. Maybe less the shreddy soloing aspect of it, which was really impressive.<sup>60</sup>

However, his initial attempts to engage with other musicians on the jazz scene were not always a success:

I remember feeling a bit disappointed actually by their reaction, because I went up to talk to a few people about it, and I guess I was like the enthusiastic annoying kid, coming up and looking for something, anything, but I didn't get anything from people.<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, Julien Colarossi remembers that seeing Louis Stewart 'was one of the things that really made me love the guitar, playing jazz guitar'. Colarossi saw Louis for the first time in the basement of Le Cirk (now called Sweeny's):

He used to play there every week, so I went once and it was an incredible gig: Dave Redmond, Myles Drennan, Sean Carpio. I remember taking notes of what he was playing—I learnt all of the tunes

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<sup>59</sup> It is interesting to note that there are numerous Irish jazz musicians who have family members that are also musicians, including Ivor and Justin Carroll and Dylan and Sue Rynhart; Brendan and Seamus Doyle; Tony, Anton, Myles and Paul Drennan; Paul, Keith, Jason and Freddy Duffy; Richard, Dick and Gerard Farrelly; Paul, Deirdre and Caitríona Frost and Catherine Frost Janeczka; Carl and Robert Geraghty; Dave and Ron Hardy; Des, Billy and Graham Hopkins; Matthew and Daniel Jacobson; Gerry, Jean, Stephen, Eoghan and Fiona Kelly, Evelyn Grant Kelly; Chris and Cormac Kenevey; Reggie, Neville and Darren Lloyd; Gay and Paul McIntyre; Nigel and Charlie Mooney; Des and Paul Moore; Carl and Mike Nielsen; Davy and Ray Martin; Gerry and Derek O'Connor; Jonathan, Ruaidhri and Shane O'Donovan; Nick Roth and Olesya Zdorovetska and Alex and Simon Roth; Jimmy and Gloria Smyth.

<sup>60</sup> Groenland interview.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

he was playing, I would go home and write down the list of the tunes that he played and learn them every week.<sup>62</sup>

John Moriarty remembers ‘of course, when I was 16, guys like Louis were playing in town, and you could go in and you could blag your way into the bars and that was ahh... slightly intimidating, because you’d go along to your first jazz gig and you think that that’s the quality everywhere, you know’.<sup>63</sup>

Although of an older generation, Ronan Guilfoyle remembers going to see Stewart a lot during his early years as a musician:

At this point I was going to the Baggot Inn to see Louis play a lot. Louis was playing in Ronnie Scott’s band and used to come home every couple of months and play a gig at the Baggot Inn to 300 people if you can believe it. He was like the conquering hero. I would sit in the front row, me and David O’Rourke, actually, that’s where we met, or standing in the queue or something.<sup>64</sup>

It is difficult to overstate the impact that Louis Stewart has had on the Dublin jazz scene, not just as the one of the first musicians from Ireland to be successful internationally, but as a point of entry for musicians to see playing live, and as a band leader who very often had young musicians in his bands. Louis serves an iconic role within the Dublin jazz scene, one that is replicated in jazz scenes throughout the world by their own ‘local hero’. While Whyton focuses on musicians that serve as icons on a global level, local icons are still very important within jazz scenes. Like Whyton’s jazz icons, for participants of the Dublin jazz scene, Stewart serves as a symbol of the jazz life, invested with meaning and supporting and perpetuating jazz mythologies.<sup>65</sup> Stewart attained the position of icon through his talent as a guitar player, but it was strengthened through his connections with the global jazz scene. As Guilfoyle stated, in the 1980s, while Stewart was playing with the Ronnie Scott band in London, he was ‘like the conquering hero’.

The power of anecdote comes into play here also. In a 2004 paper, Whyton discusses the importance of anecdote in the jazz world. The telling of anecdotes, while seeming to

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62 Colarossi interview.

63 Moriarty interview.

64 Guilfoyle interview.

65 Whyton, Tony: *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, Reprint edition (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 8.

be an ‘innocent and informal’ method of discussing jazz, functions at many levels.<sup>66</sup> It serves both a social purpose while also functioning as critical appraisal. Whyton examines anecdote in four ways, as entertainment, appropriation, mythology, and testimony.<sup>67</sup>

Stewart is known as a great teller of anecdotes as entertainment. His droll method of delivery is associated with a dry Dublin style of wit and humour. His style of telling also encourages imitation in the re-telling of his anecdotes. Take for example, the anecdote of when Stewart was in the home of U2’s frontman, Bono. Stewart said to Bono, ‘Nice place you have here’, to which Bono replied, ‘Thanks, where do you live yourself?’ ‘In the past,’ Stewart answered. While entertaining on its own, anecdotes like this function equally as appropriation, mythology, and testimony. In addition, Stewart’s anecdotes gain authority through his position as one of the few Irish jazz musicians to have worked extensively with iconic artists such as Americans Benny Goodman, Spike Robinson, Sam Jones, Billy Higgins, Clark Terry, Red Mitchell, and Peter Ind, in addition to Europeans such as Tubby Hayes, George Shearing, and Niels-Henning Orsted-Pederson.<sup>68</sup> While his anecdotes serve to connect the Irish scene to the global scene, the re-telling of Stewart’s anecdotes also serve a function. Repeating an anecdote told by Stewart connects the teller with the local hero, either musically or as a companion. The re-teller is participating in a once-removed historical testimony for being present when the original anecdote was told, which itself serves as historical testimony.

For example, Stewart once told me an anecdote of how bassist Sam Jones heard someone approaching the dressing room. Upon somebody commenting on his good hearing, Jones stated he could ‘hear a mouse piss on cotton wool’. In re-telling Stewart’s anecdote, I let the listener (or reader) know of my relationship with a jazz icon (Stewart), once removed from an even larger icon (Jones). Simultaneously, I am imparting how we discussed ‘the tradition’ (bass playing and Sam Jones), and reaffirming musical values important in the mythology of jazz (the importance of listening and having ‘big ears’). As Whyton notes, anecdotes are rarely put under the same scrutiny as other forms of re-telling historic events, noting how, ‘[u]sed as a

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66 Whyton, Tony: ‘Telling tales: witnessing and the jazz anecdote’, *Jazz Research Journal*, 1, (2004), 117.

67 *Ibid.*

68 ‘About’, Louis Stewart Official Homepage, <<http://louisstewart.net/index.php/about/>> [Accessed 17 May 2016].

means of understanding events, anecdote contains the ability to blur boundaries around more conventional readings of the past. [...] it has the capability of blurring the distinction between primary and secondary source material.’<sup>69</sup>

Personal interactions are the location of a lot of identity forming experiences for participation of the Dublin jazz scene. They both provide meaning for our own sense of identity, our self-worth, and position within the scene. Through the selection of musical and therefore social companions, musicians identify those with similar or compatible values to their own. These relationships naturally extend further into transnational relationships as scene participants begin to travel or meet travellers. Strong musical or social connections translate into sustained relationships that can be very important for participants. Equally, ‘local heroes’ can fulfil the role of the jazz icon at a local level, creating a sense of a jazz community through the promotion of authorship, authority, and authenticity.

### **3.8 Social Media**

Musicians move beyond their immediate physical space to identify with a wider community through the use of social media and the internet. Facebook, for example, can generate many different meanings within the scene and is used for different purposes. For some participants, the use of social media for promotion is ‘not what it’s (Facebook) meant for’ and is perceived more as a means of ‘bragging’.<sup>70</sup> Younger users, in contrast, sometimes enthusiastically embrace social media as a marketing tool, using it to reach new audiences, build a public profile, and create a public identity as a busy, creative, in-demand, and popular musician. Many more take a middle line and treat promotion on social media in a more casual, less ‘contrived’ manner. When some musicians embrace the new media whole-heartedly, there is often a backlash from the wider community: ‘I had to block [someone’s] Instagram account, it all got too much’.<sup>71</sup>

At one jazz gig I was involved in, the bandleader said to the band, ‘I’m so glad none of you put this up as an event on Facebook’. It was not that the bandleader did not want people coming to the gig, or that he was embarrassed by it; he felt instead that it was

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69 Whyton, ‘Telling tales: witnessing and the jazz anecdote’, 117.

70 Informal Conversation, 2014.

71 Groenland interview.



somehow lowering the value of the performance. For him, social media was about being social, and jazz performance was outside of that circle of experience.

Most musicians, however, use social media as a way of creating an identity of which they are in control. It presents an opportunity of creating a utopian version of their lives that they can present to the world. They can include and exclude gigs as they see fit. If they are involved in a multitude of different types of music, they can use social media to demonstrate their flexibility. Values and ideals can also be conveyed using social media, with participants promoting ideals of inclusion and acceptance, or alternatively promoting the values of hard work and practice as is more often seen on the 'Bassist Ireland' Facebook site.<sup>72</sup> Social media works not only in identifying musicians as part of the jazz scene but also in differentiating the different sub-scenes in which they participate.

### **3.9 Sub-Scenes**

Rather than considering the scene as only a single phenomenon situated within a spatial boundary, it can be understood as made up of smaller, overlapping scenes. In the context of Dublin, the participants' understanding of the scene revealed seven distinct groups that crossed over and interlocked. Musicians typically participated in more than one and could even, throughout their career, participate in most of them, but would usually be found to be more active in one of the sub-scenes at a given time. This could change throughout a musician's career. It must be remembered that these sub-scenes are constructions and do not represent actual organised groups or communities. All participants grouped the sub-scenes in slightly different ways, or instead described the scene as fragmented rather than dividing it. Sub-scenes can be imagined through individual performers, groups of performers, venues, or establishments, and while sometimes a classification is clear, it can also be problematic and unclear. What is of interest is how conceptions of jazz change throughout the different sub-scenes and the ways in which participants relate to the different jazz mythologies and jazz narratives.

The mainstream scene is one of the larger sub-scenes in Dublin. It is a problematic label as it implies a collection of values that may not be fully supported by all of its participants. Regardless, it could be said to represent the hegemonic conception of jazz worldwide. An emphasis on swung eighth notes, the playing of a standards repertoire,

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72 'Facebook', <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BassistIreland/>> [Accessed 17 May 2016].

and a clear aural link to a tradition of jazz and jazz ensembles typify the sub-scene. It includes most of the jazz musicians who came to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s, including Louis Stewart and Jim Doherty. The vast majority of gigs in JJ Smyth's could be easily understood as fitting into this category. Indeed, many consider JJ Smyth's as being representative of the mainstream scene. Although an entirely different performance space than JJ Smyth's, the mainstream scene could also be seen to be at work in restaurants and corporate work, and therefore cross over into the corporate/wedding scene. Critics of this scene emphasise that they feel it is the 'same old thing' and has 'been done before'.<sup>73</sup> For them, even though most will undoubtedly play standard repertoire at times, creativity in jazz is mostly found in alternative performance spaces.

Some musicians identified a sub-scene that they described as 'the Newpark scene'. Although the most difficult to define of the sub-scenes, the conception of a Newpark scene is a way of articulating the influence of the founder and director of the jazz stream at Newpark Music Centre, Ronan Guilfoyle. While the Newpark scene is not defined by being an ex-student or teacher at the school—although some may apply that criteria—almost all those who are described as being involved with it will have attended or taught at Newpark, or both. For those who conceive of it as a sub-scene, it consists of those who have embraced a certain aesthetic that includes an emphasis on rhythmic and compositional complexity. Other elements include a prerequisite for striving to achieve originality and a rejection of the commercial aspect of the music industry and jazz performance. For those who place themselves in opposition to this scene, it represents an overemphasis on intellectuality and complexity at the expense of emotion. For those same people it was also considered that the scene could display a lack of respect for an audience with performances being described as 'cold' by one participant.<sup>74</sup>

Sometimes self-identifying in opposition to the mainstream scene, participants within the 'alternative/creative' scene place emphasis on the non-commercial aspects of jazz performance, and on an aesthetic of originality. A brief mention must be given to my own labelling of this scene. It has no recognised name within the Dublin jazz scene, but rather is often referred to in relation to some of its proponents. I have chosen to give it the name 'alternative/creative' scene, as it is an alternative to the mainstream scene and

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<sup>73</sup> Anonymised interview.

<sup>74</sup> Anonymised interview.

often highlights notions of creativity and innovation. Some within the scene may take offence at this labelling, either seeing no need to separate themselves from the ‘jazz scene’ as a whole, and objecting to being side-lined, or they may see themselves as the ‘main feature’, so to speak. I acknowledge that my placing them as an ‘alternative’ betrays my own position within the scene, as well as drawing on participants’ own descriptions of their sense of identity in relation to the wider scene. That said, by describing the sub-scene as ‘alternative/creative’, I do not intend to side-line the musicians, who hold an important and ever more prominent role in Irish jazz discourse, just as by using the label ‘creative’ I do not intend to diminish the creativity in each of the other sub-scenes.

Rather than placing importance on the knowledge of standard repertoire or building reputations as players within stylistic idioms, such as bebop, players within the ‘alternative/creative’ scene place more importance on originality and often a high degree of improvisation, often embracing free improvisation. As such, the lines between jazz, improvised music and other genres are blurred. This is a state of affairs that is embraced by players within the alternative/creative scene who increasingly consider music as genre-less. The concept of a genre-less music is embraced by many within the creative/alternative scene.

Although often seen as entirely different worlds, the wedding scene and the jazz scene intersect considerably. The wedding scene provides an opportunity for Dublin jazz musicians to earn an income that is impossible to obtain playing jazz alone, and for this reason a large number of the Dublin’s jazz musicians work within the wedding sub-scene. The wedding scene, as a whole, is not made up of mostly jazz musicians, however. The majority of bands in the wedding scene play a selection of ‘hits’ from the last fifty years, and as such would play mostly pop and rock music.

Gigs on the wedding scene are generally either for the drinks reception or the main evening wedding band, and each gig has different criteria. The afternoon drinks reception is considered a ‘background’ gig—creating an ambiance while the wedding guests wait to be called in for the evening meal. While usually little or no stylistic guidelines are given to the bands, there is an unwritten understanding that the band remains background and does not demand too much attention. An evening band’s role, however, is usually to get people dancing, satisfying both the needs of the guests, and obviously, the bride and groom who are paying the band.

A musician can make a considerable amount of money playing on the wedding scene and for some a large amount of their income is derived from this aspect of their musical lives. Currently, payment for an afternoon wedding reception generally ranges from €100 to €200 per musician while an evening session typically demands between €150 and €300 per musician. Many bandleaders will charge an extra fee on top of the per musician fee. Often bands are paid an additional fee for travel. Bands usually consist of the same players, although there is a large amount of ‘depping’. For many, while the wedding scene may provide some economic stability, it is less preferable than playing within the other sub-genres. One musician stated in relation to obtaining state funding for projects: ‘I have a family and I need to make a living, and will certainly be engaging in that process [obtaining funding]. I’ve certainly upped my ability to earn a living and haven’t had to join any wedding bands—well, not recently.’<sup>75</sup>

While an empirical study of the economy of the jazz musician in Ireland would be of interest and would serve many purposes, my concern here is how musicians who identify as jazz musicians feel about what can sometimes turn into their main occupation.<sup>76</sup> Many musicians seek out employment in the wedding scene, though the musicians I spoke to stated that their motives are primarily financial. Despite a value system that places importance on musical quality at all times, in reality many musicians quickly start to find a great deal of dissatisfaction playing on the wedding scene. This can sometimes translate into a less than satisfying musical experience also.

Often then, a jazz musician working in the wedding scene is acting as a ‘musician for hire’, rather than attempting to fulfil their own artistic aims. It is this approach that musicians who work in studios and freelance also identify with. I am referring to this scene as the studio/freelance scene, even though almost all of the musicians within the jazz scene could be considered freelance, the only possible exceptions being musicians who hold full-time positions, for example, with the National Concert Orchestra, and who may also interact within the jazz scene.

The studio and freelance scene is much smaller than the wedding scene. While there are a number of smaller studios operating in Dublin, the amount of work has diminished

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<sup>75</sup> Anonymised interview.

<sup>76</sup> Quantitative studies have been conducted in the US and in the UK, see for examples: Jeffri, Joan: ‘Jazz Musicians: The Cost of the Beat’, *Journal of Arts Management, Law & Society*, 33, (2003), 40-51; also Whyton, Tony, & Christa Bruckner-Haring, eds.: *Rhythm Changes: Statistical Overviews of Five Partner Countries*, (Institute for Jazz Research, University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, 2013).

greatly in the last twenty years, largely due to the advent of digital recording. The studio/freelance scene also includes shows such as *Riverdance* and other touring shows. Another source of income for freelance musicians are pantomimes, both professional and those staged by schools around Christmas.

A final sub-scene of the Dublin jazz scene is that encompassing the musicians who make up the local big bands. There is no denying the place of big bands within jazz, and yet many of the musicians within these bands are not necessarily active in the jazz scene beyond their respective big bands. At the time of writing, the Dublin big bands playing regularly are the Dublin City Jazz Orchestra and the Hothouse Big Band. The Essential Big Band is playing approximately once a year.

Some musicians I spoke to insisted that they were not ‘part of the scene’ and saw identifying as a ‘jazz musician’ and ‘being part of the scene’ as one and the same. For them, a jazz musician was different than an all-round musician who happened to play some jazz as part of their working life. One musician, who I considered part of the jazz scene, felt strongly that he was not. He described jazz musicians as having invested a large amount of time and energy in a specific style, and that he was more of an all-rounder. Although his work included what was advertised as jazz, it was more often, for example, the ‘Sunday brunch’ gig variety, or in a studio setting for projects that involved jazz but were not ‘jazz projects’. Comparing it to a Cuban music specialist, he said: ‘I can play a bossa nova, but if you want a real Cuban sound then you have to get a specialist. It’s the same with classical or with jazz.’<sup>77</sup>

Likewise, a singer who had recently recorded an album of jazz standards with jazz musicians described herself as being ‘very much on the periphery’ of the jazz scene.<sup>78</sup> For these musicians, the concept of being a jazz musician was attached to discourses of economics and of art. They felt like they participated in musical events that jazz musicians ‘might turn up their noses a bit’ at.<sup>79</sup> They saw themselves as working musicians whose music making fulfilled a social purpose and was done for financial reward. This is not to say that music was of any less importance to them than other musicians; some, for example, gave up more lucrative jobs in order to follow a career in music. Jazz musicians, on the other hand, according to these musicians, were more

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<sup>77</sup> Anonymised interview.

<sup>78</sup> Informal conversation, 2015.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

concerned with making contemporary, original music and were happy to play for ‘little or no money in the International’.<sup>80</sup>

Before moving on to how construction of identity can work at a level beyond the local, I would like to return to the idea of ritualistic aspects of the gig and to suggest some ways in which it can contribute to identity, in either aligning a musician with a particular group or in differentiating them from other groups. It is an easy trap to imagine these options as binaries; as Tony Whyton states, ‘the antonym affirms a sense of boundary within jazz, serving to explain what is celebrated, revered, and documented as important historically’.<sup>81</sup> As such, it could be presented that musicians choosing between binaries are participating in the construction of what is valued in jazz, and even participating in the contestation over ‘what is’ to be celebrated, revered, and documented. However, Whyton continues by saying that binaries ‘help to convey a false sense of truth and objectivity and enable music history to be constructed around the values of a dominant social group or power structure’.<sup>82</sup>

I am not, therefore, presenting the options listed below in opposition to each other; rather, I am presenting them as a possible list along an almost infinite spectrum within which musicians choose to participate or not. Repertoire plays a large role in defining where the musicians locate themselves in the jazz community as a whole. The wider choices of standards, original compositions, or primarily improvised pieces can be complicated at each point, either by era and style of standards, or by style of compositional or improvisation. Stylistically, most performances will attempt to convey a number of stylistic forms, both for their own and the audience’s enjoyment, but nonetheless each performance usually has an overarching stylistic consistency. Possible descriptions would include spacious, textually thick, technically or rhythmically complex, and groove based. These descriptions are not mutually exclusive—it is possible to be rhythmically complex and groove based simultaneously—but the adoption of these styles is a sign of belonging to a certain section of both the local and global community. Contributing to style is instrumentation. Rather than just an accident of choice, instrumentation also acts as a sign. The difference between a front line of tenor, alto, and trumpet, or two guitars, bass, and drums affects the sound of the ensemble and every aspect of the music making. Just as recent studies show how we

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Whyton, *Beyond A Love Supreme*, 11.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

live our lives through embodied experience, moving away from the mind/body dichotomy of previous times, so music making is filtered through the instruments that are played.<sup>83</sup>

Moving beyond musical choices as signs of identity, I argue that every aspect of the gig is a sign that can either be used in the construction of identity for an individual, or in the reading of an identity by an individual. For example:

1. Intensity of rhythmic, dynamic, and textural nature
2. Repertoire choice—standards, originals, contemporary, spirituals, improvised
3. Style of composition—spacious, busy, technically difficult, rhythmically complex
4. Instrumentation
5. Choice of venue
6. Clothes/appearance
7. Dynamics
8. Level of social media promotion
9. Pre- and post-gig conversations
10. Warm-up styles

These elements combine with personal interactions to create meaning and identity in a way that is both local and in connection with a wider sense of identity, one that is transnational and cosmopolitan. Participants create identity and meaning locally, and use that to relate to a wider community of jazz participants. It is through direct interaction with other participants that values, ideals and meanings are defined, either through compatibility with, or in opposition to those meanings. Alternatively, the process itself of discovering and experiencing the event, can, in itself, create and maintain identity and meaning.

### **3.10 A ‘European Jazz’ Identity**

The concept of a European identity is increasingly coming to the fore of academic, political and social jazz discourse. First, I will discuss the evolution of Europe in jazz discourse, followed by a detailed account of contemporary academic debates concerning

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83 See Ellis, Carolyn, & Brydie-Leigh Bartlett, eds.: *Music Autoethnographies: Making autoethnography sing/Making music personal*, (Australian Academic Press, 2009), 231.



globalisation and jazz, moving on to the construction of a European jazz concept and how that ties into the Dublin and Irish jazz scenes.

Interest in the role of Europeans in jazz has been growing in the last number of years. Books such as E. Taylor Atkins' *Jazz Planet*, George McKay's *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*, and Jeffrey Jackson's *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris* explore jazz outside of its homeland of America.<sup>84</sup> The collection of essays in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts* explicitly sets out to correct 'the so-called Afrocentric point of view' that has contributed to the lack of studies investigating the 'European contribution to this music', stating jazz 'is simply too rich and varied for one country to claim, define or contain.'<sup>85</sup>

American jazz scholarship has often asked the question of whether jazz should be understood as an African American art form, a black art form, an American art form, or whether it should be understood as an egalitarian music that does not require the question of ownership to be asked. Although many European scholars do not ignore the construction of race and ethnicity, and how it plays a role in our understanding of jazz, an increased emphasis is placed on the topic by American writers, due to cultural tensions that are never far from the surface in jazz discourse in the United States. For example, many American writers will make an explicit statement on their consideration of whether jazz should be understood as a black music, a stance seen as unnecessary in European scholarship. Writing about the so-called 'Jazz Wars' of the early 1990s, Stuart Nicholson states that, for those 'claiming jazz as an exclusively African American form, it became a means of asserting both cultural identity and of placing a specifically African American art form at the centre of American cultural life'.<sup>86</sup>

The early 1990s saw Wynton Marsalis become a figurehead for what has become known as the neo-traditionalist movement, which placed the mid-1960s as the pinnacle of the jazz genre and dismissed much of what followed as sub-par. Perhaps it is no

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84 Atkins, E. Taylor: *Jazz Planet*, (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2003); McKay, George: *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Jackson, Jeffrey H.: *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

85 *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*, eds. Luca Cerchiari, Laurent Cugny and Franz Kerschbaumer (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2012), viii, dust jacket.

86 Nicholson, Stuart: *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, (Lebanon, NH: Northeastern University Press, 2014), 21.

coincidence that following ten years of debate, largely played out through jazz publications and the media, which at times brought into doubt the authenticity of alternative approaches to a jazz aesthetic, in Europe the debate moved from whether jazz should be considered an African American versus American music to how European musicians could claim ownership for their own musical efforts of the last ninety years. Particular emphasis was put on European movements that differed from the American model, such as those of the New Dutch School or the Nordic sound.

An important point, from the view of construction of identity, is that if it is important for European musicians to construct a musical identity that is different than that of American jazz, and it is accepted that American jazz has extremely strong African American cultural and social connections, then it is impossible to separate this new construction of identity from notions of race or ethnicity. If non-American artists are tacitly acknowledging their lack of blackness, and any attempt to reconstruct the musical language of African Americans is then automatically up for critique as 'inauthentic', the answer is to attempt to create a music that represents European culture. The more this differs from the American mainstream, the easier it is to justify the new authenticity. This reading of the situation is problematic, however, for a number of reasons. Firstly, it can tend to disregard the music of white Europeans who play mainstream jazz, and, secondly, it diminishes the importance of white American artists who, from the disputed 'genius' of Bix Beiderbecke through to the much less disputed contributions of musicians such as Bill Evans, have undoubtedly played important roles in the history of the jazz.

The problem could again come back to dichotomies and the role they have played in jazz historiography. The need for a division between white/black or American/European creates yet another false dichotomy that causes more problems than it solves. Scholars have attempted to address the way jazz functions in America and elsewhere by using the theoretical framework of globalisation.

Jazz is often presented as a music of the age of modernity, a music that spread around the world faster than any that came before it, due in no small part to the technological advancements that occurred at the same time as the music emerged. Indeed, Taylor Atkins states in *Jazz Planet* that 'jazz was a harbinger of what we now call

“globalization””.<sup>87</sup> Although there has always been movement of people, culture, and capital, the early twentieth century saw these movements occurring at a more rapid rate. Globalisation was a much-debated topic in academia during the mid-1990s, and that debate carried over into the various musicological fields. Two main arguments have emerged: the first takes a view of globalisation as an inevitable onward march of colonialism and capitalism, represented by Westernisation, Americanisation, and sometimes modernisation; an alternative view argued by, amongst others, Arjun Appadurai, Martin Stokes and Mark Slobin, posits that the flow of culture is infinitely more complex than a one-way march from the West outward, and that there is no overwhelming structure that controls the flow of culture.<sup>88</sup> In addition, though related to the latter point of view, is the concept of hybridity. That is, the meeting of different cultures due to the accelerated flow and the resultant contestation between dominant ideologies with non-dominant ideologies, and the shaping of identity within these spaces of flux.

These differing viewpoints of globalisation have come to the fore in jazz studies as scholars try to understand how jazz performance has travelled throughout the world and become meaningful internationally. In particular, scholarly debate has occurred between Stuart Nicholson and researchers representing the new jazz studies, specifically Tony Whyton. Nicholson, in his 2005 book *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, uses globalisation as a way of explaining the transmission and effect of jazz crossing national borders.<sup>89</sup> His 2014 book *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age* extends this argument and, in doing so, engages directly in opposition with the new jazz studies. Nicholson contends that the scholars associated with the new jazz studies have been affected by in-vogue ideologies and methodologies, and align themselves problematically with diasporism and transnationalism.<sup>90</sup> As an alternative, he argues

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87 Atkins, xiii.

88 Appadurai, Arjun: ‘Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy’, in *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*, eds. Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas Kellner, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 584–603; Stokes, Martin: ‘Music and the Global Order’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33, (2004); Slobin, Mark: ‘Micromusics of the West: A comparative approach’, *Ethnomusicology*, (1992).

89 Nicholson, Stuart: *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, (New York: Routledge, 2005).

90 Nicholson, *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, 121–122.

that globalisation and hybridisation, or what he calls ‘glocalization’ better explains how jazz functions culturally throughout the world.<sup>91</sup>

Referencing Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Nicholson cites three main perspectives on cultural globalisation: cultural differentialism, cultural convergence theory, and hybridisation theory.<sup>92</sup> He continues by saying that ‘in the realm of popular culture, of which jazz is a part, the cultural convergence model has long coexisted alongside the hybridisation theory’.<sup>93</sup> Nicholson notes that, while many thought that globalisation in the 1990s threatened a cultural ‘greyout’ of various world cultures, as Alan Lomax warned, the seemingly inevitable result of hegemonic American culture taking over local cultures never occurred.<sup>94</sup> Instead, as Appadurai wrote in 2001, ‘if a global cultural system is emerging, it is filled with ironies and resistances [...]’.<sup>95</sup> Processes of hybridisation can be used to explain the way in which the local recasts or transforms global culture to become relevant and give meaning to local communities, ‘strengthening and reaffirming both national and local identity’. In addition, Nicholson argues that just as the English language has taken on distinct local characteristics throughout the world, so jazz can behave in the same way, developing local hybrids.

Nicholson constructs an argument where ‘global hegemonic American’ styles of jazz are ‘reinscribed with local significance’ through engagement with ‘national imagery, folkloric, and cultural concerns’.<sup>96</sup> Drawing on examples such as British saxophonist Iain Ballamy, Swedish pianist Bobo Stenson, and Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek, Nicholson argues for an understanding of jazz that connects with both a ‘global hegemonic American’ style and a national conception that ‘glocalizes’ the music. This often involves both a respect for and a rejection of the ‘globalised styles of jazz that have been transmitted around the world by recordings of the great American masters’, resulting in attempts by musicians to represent their own personal identity through jazz music.<sup>97</sup> Nicholson singles out French, Italian, English, Scottish, Polish, and Dutch musicians amongst others as examples of ‘glocal’ jazz styles being created, often

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91 Glocalization is a conflation of the terms “globalization” and “localization” that first appeared in the late 1980s in the *Harvard Business Review*. See *Ibid.*, 97.

92 Jan Nederveen Pieterse as cited in Nicholson, 93.

93 *Ibid.*, 95.

94 Lomax, Alan: ‘Appeal for Cultural Equity’, *African Music*, 6, (1980).

95 Appadurai, Arjun: ‘Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy’, in *Media and Cultural Studies: Keyworks*, eds. Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas Kellner, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 584–603.

96 Nicholson, *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, 172.

97 *Ibid.*, 174.

reflecting nationalist notions, such as Italian composer Gianluigi Trovesi 'reimagining jazz in vivid Mediterranean hues, dancing folkloric themes, and bursts of vivid Mediterranean color', British saxophonist John Surman's music projecting 'a British sensibility [...] particularly his native West Country', or Australian pianist Graeme Bell claiming an 'openness, a big throatedness' in Australian jazz due to the 'open spaces and sea and sand'.<sup>98</sup>

Much of Nicholson's chapter 'The Globalization of Jazz' comes across as a defence of the use of globalisation theory, in particular in relation to a book chapter by Tony Whyton, 'Europe and the New Jazz Studies', in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*.<sup>99</sup> In this chapter, Whyton describes how, while new jazz studies has confronted the construction of jazz as a 'coherent and unproblematic tradition' head on, it has, however, 'arguably failed to engage with the global spread of jazz and the intercultural exchanges that have occurred in the music since its inception'.<sup>100</sup> Historical European jazz writings have been largely described, Whyton claims, as being 'overly romanticised' and displaying 'fetishistic desires for otherness, primitivistic accounts of musicians, or the ideology of European modernism'.<sup>101</sup> He makes the call for a rejection of essentialist ideologies that turn the discussion concerning jazz in Europe into an acceptance of 'established mythologies and binary oppositions', and in doing so critiques Nicholson's conception of the way jazz has adopted to local contexts.<sup>102</sup>

Whyton argues that national jazz scenes are not defined by 'national culture' or collective national consciousnesses, but are cultural constructs that serve 'a variety of purposes and reinforce certain values and beliefs'.<sup>103</sup> In particular, he is critical of Nicholson's writings about the 'Nordic Tone', which Whyton argues serves to replace one form of essentialist narrative with that of the 'innate sensibilities of Nordic musicians', portraying Scandinavia as 'an ethnically pure landscape devoid of corruption and the negative influence of the United States'.<sup>104</sup> Instead, Whyton sees jazz

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98 Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, 180, 183, 188.

99 Whyton, Tony: 'Europe and the New Jazz Studies', in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*, eds. Luca Cerchiari, Laurent Cugny, and Franz Kerschbaumer, (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2012).

100 *Ibid.*, 367.

101 *Ibid.*

102 *Ibid.*

103 *Ibid.*, 376.

104 *Ibid.*, 370.

as able to ‘transcend national and geographical borders and to challenge cultural stereotyping’.<sup>105</sup>

Central to this conception of a future jazz studies is the rejection of binaries as a primary way of conceiving how jazz works within culture and society. The basic premise of American versus European jazz is evident in Nicholson’s work, with American jazz representing a hegemonic style that local scenes actively ‘glocalize’, thus rendering the music relevant. Nicholson uses the concept of a nation state to locate the processes that ‘glocalize’ jazz, arguing that the rise in interest in national jazz scenes can be co-related to the proposed rise in nationalism as a response to globalisation.<sup>106</sup> Importantly, while Whyton believes that there is a ‘need to avoid talk of national culture in jazz as something essential’ (a phrase from which Nicholson omits the all-important last three words when quoting), and warns that ‘national sentiment is often used to promote xenophobia and fear of “otherness”’, Nicholson sees nationalism in jazz as cultural nationalism, ‘where the universalist aspiration of imagining “the other” takes on an inclusive form’.<sup>107</sup> Nicholson states that the jazz world is ‘less concerned with political nationalism, rather versions of cultural nationalism’.

However, this way of imagining a separation of culture and politics is dubious at best and I would argue that the two are inextricably linked. To deny the existence of the political in national cultural endeavours is already a political act in itself. The jazz scene exists through the interaction of its participants and its institutions. The power struggles that occur through these interactions are inherently political, reflecting and promoting some ideals and values over others. Additionally, institutions have the power to directly affect musical change, just as the day-to-day lives of musicians do also. The day-to-day lives of musicians and jazz participants take place within institutions that, while not describing themselves as embracing political nationalism, nonetheless exist within a society where the mere fact of existence demands political involvement. The Dance Halls Act of 1935, licencing laws, public transport, closing time, on street parking, tax laws and alcohol tax are just a few of the political elements that not only affect the day-to-day of jazz performance, but have also shaped its past.

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> Nicholson, *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, 92.

<sup>107</sup> Whyton, ‘Europe and the New Jazz Studies’, 377, 370; Nicholson, *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age*, 111.

When musicians within a scene bring their music to an audience, even in the internet age, it is almost always first within a local context. Within this context there is no need to bring in a national element to the ‘texts’ involved, whether they be song titles or promotional material, unless the target audience is wider than local. There is, of course, the implicit information being conveyed that in being local, the music is already ‘within’ a national context. The explicit national markers begin when involving establishments that have direct links to political establishments. One example, which will be dealt with more fully in a case study in Chapter 5, is the ‘Down With Jazz’ festival presented by the Improvised Music Company. ‘Down With Jazz’ is clearly a celebration of a national jazz scene, inclusive of the many non-Irish-born musicians that are based in the country, but it is also an important part of the Improvised Music Company’s portfolio of services that it provides as a cultural establishment funded by the Arts Council, itself directly funded by the Irish government and taxpayers. Promotional material on its website demonstrates the Arts Council-friendly language that is adopted: ‘Contemporary and inclusive, Down With Jazz is a big tent that welcomes musicians and music lovers of all persuasions, from funk and electronica, to chamber pop and free improv, with a line-up that reflects our diversity today.’<sup>108</sup>

Additionally, another of the Improvised Music Company’s festivals, ‘12 Points’, which won an award for adventurous programming from the Europe Jazz Network, could be said to have equal significance both culturally and politically. In its promotional material on the 12 Points website, the Improvised Music Company explicitly states a European political awareness. Named in reference to the maximum number of points that can be awarded in the Eurovision Song Contest, the impetus for the festival began ‘during Ireland’s 2004 presidency of the EU, which coincided with the May accession of ten new member states’.<sup>109</sup> The webpage goes on to speak of ‘the narrative of contemporary European jazz’ and that jazz ‘can lay claim to being Europe’s musical lingua franca, a conduit for cultural dialogue that transcends borders, a celebration of regional diversity and ethnicities, and a platform for education and cultural exchange’. The connection to the EU presidency is again noted with the German presidency providing an opportunity for the 12 Points festival to be included in the programme of activities in Dublin. The involvement of worldwide German cultural institution the

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108 ‘About’, Down With Jazz, <<http://downwithjazz.ie/about/>> [Accessed 5 August 2015].

109 ‘The 12 Points Story—12 Points Festival’, <<http://www.12points.ie/about/story>> [Accessed 5 August 2015].



Goethe Institut saw other key cultural agencies become involved such as: in Ireland, Culture Ireland and Dublin City Council; and, throughout the EU, the Europe Jazz Network, Musik Centrum Nederlands, the AFIJMA (Association of Innovative Jazz and Contemporary Music Festivals), ‘and many others’.<sup>110</sup>

The ‘Culture 2025 Discussion Document’ published by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht cites two European Commission documents, stating: ‘There is now a growing view that there is a need for the European Union to develop an overall cultural policy to foster the cultural and creative industries.’<sup>111</sup> Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states:

The Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing “common cultural heritage to the fore”.<sup>112</sup>

A conception of a European jazz therefore gives the opportunity for it to be ‘brought to the fore’, as has occurred in projects such as HERA-funded *Jazz Cultures and European Identities* project (rhythmchanges.net), and the JPI Heritage Plus-funded CHIME! (Cultural Heritage and Improvised Music in European Festivals).<sup>113</sup>

Embracing the political and the cultural has enabled companies such as the Improvised Music Company to extend their work beyond the local and become significant agents in a Europe-wide scene. In doing so, they are able to demonstrate to their funders (the Arts Council in the case of IMC) and business partners the relevance and importance of their work. In essence, without the political, the power of the Improvised Music Company is severely limited, as is its ability to carry out its remit.

The rise of the national in European jazz, the concept of a ‘European jazz narrative’, and a rejection of ‘hegemonic American styles’ is not just a coincidental ‘coming of age’ of different European jazz scenes but is directly related to funding and political agendas. To put it simply, in order to obtain high-level funding, organisations must demonstrate how they are relevant to current aims and criteria of the funding agencies, themselves political organisations and establishments that work within the structures of

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht: Culture 2025 Discussion Document, (2015).

<sup>112</sup> European Commission: EU Commission COM (2014) 477: Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe, European Commission, (2014), 2  
<[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf)>.

<sup>113</sup> HERA – Humanities in the European Research Area; JPI – Joint Programming Initiatives.

institutionalised ideologies. This in itself should not be assumed as a negative, but it is important to remember that if stylistic change in jazz is understood, as Nathan Bakkum contends, as reflecting ‘changes in the social makeup of jazz communities and the new interactive patterns that emerge from those changing relationships’, then it is important to acknowledge the influence that the political system has, especially as much of the attention of political agencies is focused upon the younger musician.<sup>114</sup> This can come in the form of training, professional development courses, such as those offered by Music Network, the focus on ‘emerging musicians’ in festivals like 12 Points, or the programming of ‘funk and electronica, to chamber pop and free improv’ in the Down With Jazz festival.

To bring this back from the European to the local, I ask the question, is the desire to create exciting and innovative music a new development in Irish musicians? I would argue that current musical developments, like those that came before, should always be considered as existing within wider interactive systems, including political and social aspects. The existence of the political does not need to imply a lack of artist agency, or of a global system in which musicians have no control, it is simply an acknowledgement that jazz exists as a system within a system.

While the innovation that is shown both by organisers and musicians at festivals such as Down With Jazz is rightly celebrated and awarded, it is of additional interest to reflect upon how these are situated in the wider discourse of jazz as a cultural art form. My fieldwork suggested that, rather than reflecting wider cultural evaluations of what jazz is or was, the Improvised Music Company’s festivals take an active role in ‘broadening the church’ of jazz music in an attempt to promote innovation within the scene and to continue to build an audience for jazz festivals. The ability of institutions within jazz scenes to instigate change is discussed further in the ‘Down With Jazz’ case study in Chapter 5.

### **3.11 Summary**

In this chapter I have investigated the construction of identity for jazz scene participants, drawing from ethnographic fieldwork and interviews within the Dublin jazz scene. Beginning with Finnegan’s conception of pathways I demonstrated how participants often share parts of the journey into jazz through educational institutions or

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<sup>114</sup> Bakkum, Nathan: ‘Don’t push, don’t pull: Jazz rhythm section interaction and musical change’, Ph.D. diss., (Illinois: The University of Chicago, 2009), 6.

venues. Looking at the development of personal identity I noted how participants engage with ritual and mythology in their gaining an understanding of jazz and their relationship with it. While actively identifying as a 'jazz musician' or 'jazz fan' usually comes with a moment of epiphany, these moments are shaped by innumerable interactions with the mythos of jazz as mediated through recordings, institutions, posters, movies, and interactions with a jazz community. Through interactions with the jazz scene, a personal sense of identity is constructed and maintained through musical and social interactions, a phenomenon that was investigated through a case study of pre-gig ritual.

Moving outwards to a sense of identity of a jazz scene, I demonstrated how musicians engage with a sense of sharing values and understanding with a wider global community and how that is experienced through relationships within a local scene. The importance of relationships and interactions was highlighted as one of the most vital aspects of jazz performance. The role of icons within jazz scenes was also investigated noting the seminal role that Louis Stewart plays in Dublin jazz scene mythology and the role of anecdote.

Further understanding of how identity works at a scene level was gained through looking at social media and how the Dublin jazz scene exists as multiple sub-scenes. The construction of scene is actually a personal construction undertaken by individuals who note other participants who share musical, societal, and cultural values. Participants identify within sub-scenes while still participating within a wider scene. Identity construction is multi-levelled and ongoing.

Finally, the third part of this investigation showed how a construction of a European jazz identity was closely connected to social, cultural, and political movements. Highlighting academic debate, I have argued for an understanding of the transnational movement of jazz to include the political, and how this could help our understanding of the many different forces at work within local jazz scenes.

The day-to-day development of local jazz styles are ultimately performed in the day-to-day actions of jazz participants; however, these are guided by working with and against the constraints imposed by social, cultural, and political discourse. Identity within a jazz scene is a multi-faceted, continuous construction that allows participants to understand

themselves within a larger context and to obtain agency in creating identity within the scene.

## **Chapter 4: Institutions, Knowledge and Power**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I use thematic areas suggested by ethnographic data to explore the constant creation of identity and meaning by participants in Dublin jazz performance. Focusing on institutions, knowledge and power, I follow on from Travis Jackson in arguing that to best gain a deeper understanding of jazz performance, it should be studied within the context of a jazz scene.<sup>1</sup> This chapter looks at the institutions that shape the existence of a jazz scene, specifically its venues, educational institutions, promotional groups and musician-led initiatives.

Drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Becker and Foucault, I investigate the creation of meaning and identity through the activity of individuals within the context of the larger frameworks that shape and restrain their undertakings. While all theorists present differing ways in which to understand the underlying principles that shape cultural activities, the struggle between agency and the constraints of social structure also feature in all three. Utilising their work, I aim to demonstrate how institutions allow, shape and constrain the creation of identity and meaning within the Dublin jazz scene.

Drawing on interviews and field notes, I consider how institutions within the Dublin jazz scene affect the pathways that individual participants travel as they interact with it. I begin by examining spatiality and venues, treating them both as a way in which participants utilise space for their own means and as one of the ways through which jazz is mediated for participants in the scene. I then turn my focus to educational and promotional bodies, analysing how flows of power impact upon individual choice and freedom. Finally, I investigate musician-led initiatives as one of the ways in which musician participants attempt to gain control of the production and consumption of jazz performance.

### **4.2 Venues and Spatiality**

As well as giving an overview of Dublin venues, this section will give detailed attention to four in particular: the Mint Bar (Westmoreland Street); the International Bar (Wexford Street); Bewley's Café Theatre (Grafton Street); and JJ Smith's (Aungier

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson, Travis A.: *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene*, (Chicago: University of California Press, 2012), 105.

Street). It should be noted that since the time this study commenced, Bewley's Café Theatre has ceased to function as a jazz venue.

To study jazz within a scene is to locate its workings within a spatial dimension. For Travis Jackson, 'space, in its geographic and theoretical dimensions, is a crucial component for understanding and conceptualizing jazz'.<sup>2</sup> As Jackson notes, space is often treated in jazz studies as historical. In the common historical narrative of jazz in the United States, a location becomes temporarily fertile until it hands the baton on to another location. This narrative is not restricted to academia alone; it is perpetuated in books, movies, and jazz education, and has since been problematized and debated.<sup>3</sup> Further examples are the treatment of jazz music in Chicago in the 1920s, Kansas City in the 1930s, and the West Coast in the 1950s. The continuity of jazz performance in these geographical areas after the boom is rarely addressed, even though music did not stop in New Orleans with the closure of Storyville. Once the baton has been passed, the lens of the historical writer usually moves to the next location or the framework reverts back to a 'great man' dialogue.

Drawing on the work of Marxist geographers such as David Harvey and Edward W. Soja (inspired by Henri Lefebvre), Jackson suggests looking at the way jazz musicians use space and spatiality over time and defines spatiality as 'a function of how people manipulate space and make it useful for their own ends'.<sup>4</sup> It is a 'dynamic product of the relationships between individuals and groups and is, as a result, instrumental in the way that they navigate both space and time'.<sup>5</sup> Scholars of 'new' urban sociology have tended to make a distinction between urbanism that allows for a freer cultural existence and an urbanism determined by the economic organisation of space.<sup>6</sup> The Dublin jazz scene is both a space that exists through attempts by its participants to create a freer cultural existence and a space that is organised economically, influenced by institutions and wider socio-economic factors. Furthermore, as noted by Pinheiro and Dowd, because cultural fields are located in physical spaces, including clubs, neighbourhoods, cities,

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<sup>2</sup> Jackson, 52.

<sup>3</sup> See: Gioia, Ted: *The History of Jazz*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 30–31; and Yanow, Scott: *Jazz: a regional exploration*, (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 2005), 10.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson, 54.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Zukin, Sharon: 'David Harvey on Cities', in *David Harvey: A Critical Reader*, eds. Noel Castree and Derek Gregory (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 105; New Urban Sociology emerged in the 1970s, see Brym, Robert and Lie, John: *Sociology: Pop Culture to Social Structure*, (Cengage Learning, 2012), 373.

regions, and nations, then what passes for various capital (in the Bourdieusian sense) ‘is ultimately rooted in place’.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.2.1 Dublin as Periphery/NYC

Just as Dublin exists on the periphery of Europe, it can also be imagined as being on the periphery of a global jazz scene. Historically, emigration has long been part of the national psyche and Irish musicians routinely choose to experience life away from their place of birth. Dublin can be understood in relation to its peripheral position both spatially and culturally. While, for older generations of musicians such as Louis Stewart, flautist Brian Dunning and guitarist David O’Rourke, New York City (hereafter referred to as New York) was the choice of destination, newer generations of musicians, while continuing to move to and visit New York, have also found opportunities closer to home, especially in London and the Scandinavian countries. Although an argument could be made for a burgeoning creative jazz scene, Irish musicians speak of the difficulty in achieving an impact beyond the island.<sup>8</sup> While other European cities have experienced periods of high profile jazz activity, Jackson notes the privileged position of New York as a space that has never lost its position as the epicentre of jazz performance.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the world, New York retains a myth-like reputation captured in the line ‘if you can make it there, you’ll make it anywhere’.<sup>10</sup> In a 1945 *Irish Times* article titled ‘This is a Jam Session!’, New York is cited as the place of origin of such sessions.<sup>11</sup> The prestige of New York is capitalised upon when visiting musicians from the city are billed as such, while Irish jazz musicians can gain credibility if they have lived in New York and performed in its venues. Musicians move to New York to be amongst the best performers and to be immersed in an environment and culture of artistic achievement and struggle. Ronan Guilfoyle, for example, spoke about his brother Conor in the context of having a liberal ethos toward what constitutes jazz: ‘He went to New York—he lived there for a year and a half—so he experienced the real world.’<sup>12</sup> Promoter Dominic Reilly cited a life-changing experience while attending a New York club,

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7 Pinheiro, Diogo L. and Dowd, Timothy J.: ‘All that jazz: The success of jazz musicians in three metropolitan areas’, *Poetics*, 37, (2009), 496.

8 See Sanders, Patrick: *Jazz Futures Document*, (Improvised Music Company, 2013), 3.

9 Jackson, 53.

10 Ebb, Fred (words) and Kander, John (music): ‘New York, New York’, (EMI Music Publishing Ltd., 1977)

11 ‘This Is a “Jam Session”’, 12.

12 Guilfoyle interview.



while guitarist John Moriarty's interview was peppered with references to New York as an example of a typical, or atypical, jazz scene.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, vocalist Edel Meade spoke of spending six weeks in New York studying at the School for Improvised Music.<sup>14</sup> From a Bourdieusian perspective, it is possible then for artists to gain cultural and symbolic capital through interaction with the New York scene: the more successful their involvement is viewed to be, the more capital gained. Successful in this sense would mean playing with known participants of the New York scene, playing in recognised venues, and producing music judged to be successful by participants back in Dublin.

The relevance of New York was highlighted in a 2014 article in the *Irish Times* by journalist and drummer Cormac Larkin, a founding member of the IMC. In it, he describes 'taking a bite from the Big Apple' as an 'essential rite of passage' and goes on to discuss the experiences of six Irish musicians in New York.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, each of the three 'international' musicians I interviewed in the early stages of this study mentioned New York in the sense of it being a city to which musicians gravitated, a space where musicians gathered in order to participate in the creative, technical and aesthetic aspects of jazz performance. Living and working in New York does not, in itself, enable a musician to attain the necessary skills and knowledge to 'succeed', but the experience does provide the opportunity to participate with a community of musicians involved in what Mark Banks calls 'the ongoing achievement of *standards of excellence*'.<sup>16</sup>

Musicians attempt to achieve these standards of excellence by 'paying their dues', proving themselves among their peers and being around the best musicians. Even if musicians do not live there, they travel to New York, almost like a pilgrimage (Jackson refers to New York as the 'Mecca' of jazz), to see what has traditionally been viewed as 'the cutting edge' of jazz.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, David King of the iconoclastic piano trio the Bad Plus, spoke of the value of jazz as a community music:

[J]azz in its golden age, it's like neighbourhood music, it's like music from communities when people knew each other and it's not from like, the highest level players from music schools, moving to New York and

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13 Reilly, Dominic: Interview by author, 28 August 2013; Moriarty interview.

14 Meade interview.

15 Larkin, Cormac: 'New York City: is it still a Mecca for musicians on the make?', *Irish Times*, 5 April 2014, 7.

16 Banks, Mark: 'MacIntyre, Bourdieu and the practice of jazz', *Popular Music*, 31, (2012), 71.

17 See Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, 168.

hooking up in Brooklyn and having jam sessions, that's not the highest level of the music at all.<sup>18</sup>

King's statements are tied into concepts of authenticity and 'real jazz'. For King, the 'local' aspect of jazz scenes is what feeds 'real jazz' and the 'highest level of music'. Pianist Bill Carrothers spoke of when he was in his 'mid-twenties and living in New York', and Paul Clarvis spoke about how he 'hunted out Vernel Fournier in New York and I had some lessons with him'.<sup>19</sup> While New York as a conceptually singular space represents a central focus for a global conception of jazz scenes, the day-to-day lives of Dublin musicians are lived out in a variety of smaller spaces.

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<sup>18</sup> King, David: Interview by author, 29 May 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Clarvis, Paul: Interview by author, 26 July 2012.

#### 4.2.2 The Mint Bar

As a window into some of the issues regarding venues in the Dublin jazz scene, I will start with an examination of a venue considered by many participants to be outside the Dublin jazz scene, the Mint Bar. The Mint Bar is a basement bar of the Westin Hotel, a five star hotel on Westmoreland Street, Dublin 2 (see Figure 4). While none of the musicians I spoke to considered it a jazz venue, it is a place where many of the Dublin jazz scene players would have performed at some point, and while the performances would often not be considered ‘jazz performances’, they often consist of jazz repertoire, played in a jazz style often with a vocalist but including instrumentals.

While for many of the jazz musicians (but not all) who play jazz material there, the gig does not constitute a ‘jazz gig’; the Westin Hotel itself certainly included jazz as a central aspect of the marketing of their weekend entertainment package for a ten-year period from c2006 to 2016. As of December 2014, the Mint Bar website appeared second in a Google search for ‘jazz venues Dublin’.<sup>21</sup> The Mint Bar website title is ‘Jazz, Swing, Lounge, Soul, Funk, Disco | The Mint Bar Dublin Cocktail Bar | Official Site’, and the keywords are ‘mint, bar, cocktail, bar, jazz, westin, dublin, nightlife’. The website promotes ‘Gin & Jazz Thursdays’, ‘Swingin’ Fridays’, and the word ‘jazz’ appears eight times on the one page.<sup>22</sup> Why then does a gig including jazz repertoire, played by jazz musicians, and advertised as jazz, still not come to be considered as a jazz gig by the majority of the musicians I spoke to during my research?

The physical space of the Mint Bar itself may go some way to explaining this. The venue takes its name from its previous incarnation as a bank’s vaults and has a dome stone ceiling, resulting in what musicians invariably describe as bad acoustics. As it is located in a five star hotel, drink prices are generally considered expensive (in 2006, during the ‘Celtic Tiger’ era, the Mint Bar prided itself on having Ireland’s most expensive cocktail, priced at €500). While jazz can be played in the Mint Bar, it is not a venue that people generally frequent in order to listen to jazz. More often the audience is a combination of hotel guests, private parties, and people generally socialising and drinking. The combination of a poor quality sound and a largely inattentive audience

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21 ‘Jazz venues Dublin—Google Search’, <[https://www.google.com/search?q=jazz+venues+dublin&oq=jazz+venues+dublin&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i65j69i60l2j69i59j69i60.2870j0j4&sourceid=chrome&es\\_sm=119&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=jazz+venues+dublin&oq=jazz+venues+dublin&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i65j69i60l2j69i59j69i60.2870j0j4&sourceid=chrome&es_sm=119&ie=UTF-8)> [Accessed 19 December 2014].

22 ‘Jazz, Swing, Lounge, Soul, Funk, Disco | The Mint Bar Dublin Cocktail Bar | Official Site’, The Mint Bar Dublin Cocktail Bar Official Site, <<http://www.themintbar.ie/bands>> [Accessed 19 December 2014].

# Dublin Postal Districts

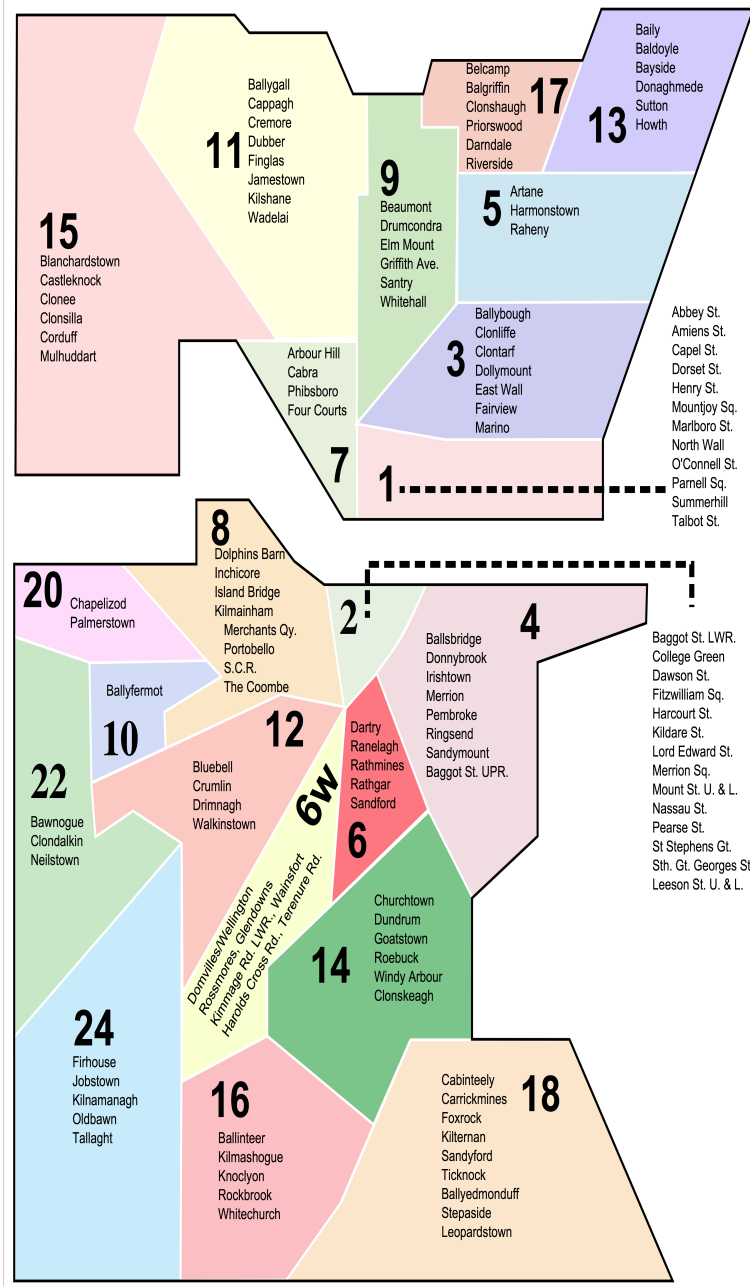


Figure 4: Map of Dublin Postal Districts<sup>23</sup>

23 Boss, Stabilo: English: Map of Dublin Postal Districts, 24 September 2007  
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DublinPC.svg> [Accessed 28 January 2015].

can make performing in the Mint Bar difficult for many musicians, the result being that the positive effects that are attributed to playing music are more difficult to achieve. One musician said to me, ‘Don’t you feel like it [the room/space] just sucks all the love out of the room?’<sup>24</sup> Rather, for the musicians I have spoken to, this is often playing music largely for the purposes of obtaining money, staying ‘in with a scene’, or gaining experience. The pay, for example, is at the higher end of pub gig pay, in my experience between €100 and €120 for a two and a half hour engagement. Some musicians use the Mint Bar as a showcase for their wedding/corporate bands that provide them with financial security, not easily achieved (most would say impossible to achieve) by performing strictly ‘jazz’ gigs alone (a situation also very difficult in New York as stated in Larkin’s piece on Irish musicians in New York).<sup>25</sup>

I write about the Mint Bar at this point because it introduces many of the struggles and negotiations that occur to a degree in all venues as musicians attempt to utilise space for their own purposes. It also exposes the reality of day-to-day practice for many musicians within the Dublin jazz scene and how this differs from a romantic notion of a jazz scene. Nathan Bakkum argues that the stylistic history of jazz should be ‘understood as a history of practice, fundamentally tied to the daily work of musicians’.<sup>26</sup> Following on from Bakkum, I argue that ignoring the daily work that musicians do not wish to present as part of their constructed identity to the world, is to ignore an important aspect of the jazz scene. It is rare to find a jazz musician who wishes to emphasise gigs that get away from the ‘pure’ jazz experience. For example, I have yet to see a musician advertising their Mint bar gigs on Facebook, yet these types of gigs are often part of the daily activity of jazz musicians, as are the restaurants, weddings, pantomimes, and hotel lobby engagements. It is in these venues where the experiences, skills, and rewards that people get out of being involved in music performance are contrasted with the economic and political issues that are also part of any social enterprise. The musician who depends on gigs for a livelihood wants to work at the Mint Bar for economic gain; the musician who wants to increase their workload wants to work at the Mint Bar in order to increase their social contacts, and to be on the scene. However, if the musicality of the event does not meet their own musical expectation, the musicians tend to separate this part of their working and social lives

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24 Informal conversation, 2014.

25 Larkin, 7.

26 Bakkum, Nathan: ‘Don’t push, don’t pull: Jazz rhythm section interaction and musical change’, Ph.D. diss., (Illinois: The University of Chicago, 2009), 11.

from their involvement on the jazz scene. The contrast and tension between the ‘the jazz life’ and the need to earn money to survive is made clearer in venues like the Mint Bar, but it exists in all locations within the scene. Furthermore, venues such as the Mint Bar are presenting a conception of jazz that is in contrast to other institutions. For the Mint Bar, jazz is cool, suave, sophisticated, and background. For other institutions, jazz is foreground, innovative, creative, and sometimes even confrontational. Every institution uses space in a different way in order to best serve its purposes.

#### **4.2.3 David Harvey on Space**

The map that appeared earlier in the chapter (see Figure 4), and the table of Dublin venues included in Appendix B, are representations of the Dublin jazz scene that rely on a Cartesian-Newtonian conception of space as absolute. Absolute space can be considered as fixed and, as such, can be represented by coordinates and standardised measurements. David Harvey proposes two other conceptions of space: relative space and relational space. The former concerns the relationships between objects that exist ‘only because objects exist and relate to each other’, while the latter draws from German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) and is ‘contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects’.<sup>27</sup>

For Harvey, the notion of space as relative works in a double sense, in that there are multiple geometries to choose from and that ‘the spatial frame depends crucially upon what it is that is being relativized and by whom’.<sup>28</sup> Harvey demonstrates that space as defined by bounded territories can be completely redefined by creating maps of distances measured in terms of cost, time, mode of transport, or by looking at networks or topological relations.<sup>29</sup> This concept can be used to demonstrate how the scene is not only an entity in absolute space but exists in relationship with its participants. Every individual, though experiencing the scene through shared space, will have a unique conception, not just of the institutions but of the relative importance of spaces and locations.

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27 Harvey, David: *Social Justice and the City*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) as cited in Harvey, David: *David Harvey: a critical reader*, eds. Noel Castree and Derek Gregory (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 271.

28 *Ibid.*, 272.

29 *Ibid.*, 272–273.

The relational concept of space holds that ‘processes do not occur *in* space but define their own spatial frame’ (italics in original).<sup>30</sup> Processes within space and time are essential to understanding space and by extension, scenes and jazz performance. As such this chapter focuses on processes, activities, and behaviours within institutions and demonstrates how each institution is used and treated to serve different purposes. Martin Stokes (drawing on Giddens) points out that in the modern world, the locality of place (locale) can be penetrated by cultural influences from far and wide. Music has the power to ‘relocate’ and in doing so involves ‘notions of difference and social boundary’ and organises ‘hierarchies of a moral and political order’.<sup>31</sup> During my fieldwork, both enthusiastic listeners and seasoned professionals have stated that a performance was ‘like being in New York’, with the implication that the space ‘felt right’, or that the music reached a high level. Music invokes both space and time with its referential qualities that speaks to the value systems of those involved. When all the participants in the space celebrate the success of the occasion together, it is these moments that are referred to when people say ‘something special happened’ and the meaning of the performance is given a deeper resonance.

#### **4.2.4 Bourdieu and the Social Structures Surrounding Jazz**

An understanding of space and venues as absolute, relative and relational helps to explain the different ways through which venues are used and understood by jazz scene participants. Because participants have different motivations, pathways, histories, and social, cultural, and economic lives, each participant’s conception of an institution is individual. To further understand how participants use institutions and space, many researchers have turned to Pierre Bourdieu’s ideas of organisational fields.<sup>32</sup>

Bourdieu argues that agents’ actions are constrained by what he calls *habitus*, that is ‘conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence’, or, as Mark Banks puts it, ‘the system of inherited and embodied dispositions that tend to frame the

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>31</sup> *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Stokes, Martin (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997), 3.

<sup>32</sup> See Kirschbaum, Charles: ‘Careers in the right beat: US jazz musicians’ typical and non-typical trajectories’, *Career Development International*, 12, (2007); Laver, Mark T.: “‘The Greatest Jazz Concert Ever:’ Pierre Bourdieu and the Shifting Ontology of Bebop’, *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation*, 5, (2009); Pinheiro and Dowd; Banks. For ethnomusicological approaches to incorporate Bourdieu’s theories see: Cottrell, Stephen: *Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2004); Turino, Thomas: *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).



ways in which people act and react in different social settings'.<sup>33</sup> Artistic and cultural practices are located by Bourdieu within a 'field of cultural production [...] a structured arrangement of transactions and exchanges which is both a context and outcome of objective social forces and the strategic, habitual actions of the agents that occupy its parameters'.<sup>34</sup> Bourdieu's work makes use of conceptions of power relationships between agents in relation to various kinds of capital, including economic, symbolic, cultural, and social capital. Bourdieu has proved useful for many scholars in theorising jazz's 'historically determined, structural and habitual character, as well as its competitive ontology'.<sup>35</sup> Many scholars, however, such as Mark Banks, have argued that Bourdieu's theories do not account for human agency to an adequate degree.<sup>36</sup>

Banks is not alone in searching for an analysis of the social and cultural milieu surrounding jazz that allows for more scope within human agency than the mere exchange of capitals. Stephen Cottrell argues that the various capitals employed by Bourdieu do not sufficiently account for the individual agency of musicians and the activities they undertake, such as deputising musical engagements to other musicians.<sup>37</sup> Cottrell introduces the concept of 'musical capital', which he describes as a measure of the desirability of musical participation in an engagement from the musicians' point of view.<sup>38</sup> Musical capital then takes into account aspects of reputation and profile (symbolic capital) as well as issues of 'legitimate' and popular culture (cultural capital). Cottrell's notion of musical capital gives more agency to the musician than Bourdieu's theories and allow for the deliberate manipulation of events in order to accrue musical capital rather than being primarily dependent on social class or educational background.<sup>39</sup>

For Cottrell, musical capital is an individually constructed concept that is always in conflict with economic capital.<sup>40</sup> While economic capital can be measured empirically, musical capital is dependent upon a musician's career goals, personality, and *habitus*,

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33 Bourdieu, Pierre: *The Logic of Practice*, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 53; Banks, 79.

34 Banks, 79.

35 *Ibid.*, 83.

36 Mark Banks makes a call to extend our understanding of jazz by the inclusion of the 'socially shaping significance of ethics and values that lie beyond the strategizing of exchangeable interests in an objective field of struggles'. *Ibid.*

37 Cottrell, 65–69; Thomas Turino makes a similar argument in *Turino*, 120–121.

38 Cottrell, 65–69.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

and it is this that allows Cottrell to conceive of a musician's work as symbolic of their involvement in a particular community.<sup>41</sup> While each performance event is superficially the same for each musician present, individuals imbue the event with 'different meanings according to context'.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, Howard S. Becker argues that a Bourdieusian concept of art fields again reduces human agency and again replaces it with 'forces, spaces, relations, and actors (characterized by their relative power) who develop strategies using the variable amounts of power they have available'.<sup>43</sup> Becker's conception of 'art worlds', on the other hand, contains the metaphor of a world, filled with people. Becker considers Bourdieu's field as a closed unit, limited by rules and practices and impossible to enter unless allowed to do so by those already inside it.<sup>44</sup> '[W]here the field is an abstraction, the world consists of empirically observable phenomena; and where the field implies determining 'global structures', the world is designed to describe 'real people'.<sup>45</sup>

While many have critiqued Bourdieu for his perceived lack of attention to individual agency, others, such as Nick Couldry, have argued that the individual has always been present in Bourdieu's work and in fact one of his later works, *The Weight of the World* (1999), 'faced head-on the question of exactly what weight can be given to individual voices in the analysis of the social world, implicitly addressing earlier criticism of his work for neglecting such voices.'<sup>46</sup>

As the example of the Mint Bar showed, it is at the intersection of spaces and the exchange of capitals where claims are made on jazz by participants wishing to create meaning of their own involvement. While there is a synergy between venues seeking to exploit the symbolic and cultural capital of jazz, and musicians seeking economic capital, issues of authenticity and legitimacy come into play as musicians and other

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41 *Ibid.*

42 *Ibid.*

43 Becker, Howard Saul: *Art Worlds, 25th Anniversary Edition* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2008), 374.

44 *Ibid.*, 374–376.

45 Becker, Howard Saul: 'A dialogue on the ideas of "world" and "field" with Alain Pessin', *Sociological Forum*, 21, (2006), 279 as quoted in Prior, Nick: 'It's a Social Thing, Not a Nature Thing': Popular Music Practices in Reykjavik, Iceland', *Cultural Sociology*, 9, (2015), 16.

46 Couldry, Nick: 'The Individual Point of View: Learning From Bourdieu's *The Weight of the World*', *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*, 5, (2005), 5. See *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, eds. Bourdieu, Pierre and Accardo, Alain (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1999).

participants seek to claim ‘jazz’ as something other than background entertainment for socialising.

In the following sections I will look at venues drawing on the theories and concepts of Bourdieu, Cottrell, and Becker, in order to more fully understand the role venues play within the scene.

#### **4.2.5 Dublin Venues**

Dublin in the mid- to late 2010s is considered to be coming out of a recessionary period that followed a time of unprecedented economic growth in the Irish Republic from the 1990s up until c2008. Writing in the journal *Cities* in 2001, Gearing Ellis and Jong Kim state that this growth was ‘unmatched in Europe and has transformed Dublin into a modern, world-class city’. It was threatened, however, by spiralling house prices, urban sprawl, intensifying congestion, and increased commuting times.<sup>47</sup> Citing F. MacDonald from 1985, they assert that urban renewal was a relatively recent phenomenon in Ireland when compared to most other European cities, not becoming a ‘concerted government activity’ until the 1980s.<sup>48</sup> At this time ‘the whole of Ireland was in deep economic recession, with widespread urban decay throughout the country, leading to Dublin being described as ‘probably the shabbiest, most derelict city in Europe’.<sup>49</sup>

The geographic space of Dublin is primarily defined by the River Liffey, which runs through the middle of the city, dividing it into ‘north’ and ‘south’ Dublin. Indeed, Dublin’s postal system divides the city in relation to the river. Areas north of the river have uneven numbers while areas south of the river have even numbers.<sup>50</sup> North Dublin city centre is Dublin 1 while south Dublin city centre is Dublin 2. Dublin 2 could be considered the city centre proper, containing both the regenerated Temple Bar area and Grafton Street pedestrianised area. Many venues are located in or within a few minutes’ walk from these areas (see Figure 4).

The differences between the north side and south side are often explored in social commentaries in the media and online. Differences in accents are often used as signifiers of larger social and cultural differences, which equate to a higher level of wealth, education, and cultural standing on the south side. Nick Prior’s 2015 paper

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47 Ellis, Geraint and Kim, Jong: ‘Dublin’, *Cities*, 18, (2001), 363.

48 McDonald, Frank: *The Destruction of Dublin*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985) as cited in Ellis and Kim, 358.

49 *Ibid.*

50 The two exceptions being Phoenix Park and Chapelizod village.

concerning popular music in Reykjavík argues that the socio-spatial configuration of the city ‘both mirrors and favours the development of dense creative networks and attendant forms of conflict, diversity and collaboration’.<sup>51</sup> Prior argues that although Reykjavík’s has a small population of 120,000, its dense urban centre helps generate socio-musical connections and collectives and is ‘intrinsic to the unfolding of inter-subjective musical affiliations and mutually-supportive clusters’.<sup>52</sup>

Though the majority of venues may be in Dublin 2, housing within the area is prohibitively priced so as to be outside of the price range of most musicians. While Dublin jazz musicians are spread across the suburbs of Dublin, or live outside the city within a short (under an hour) drive away, the area that has a concentration of musicians participating in the Dublin jazz scene is that surrounding Dún Laoghaire. The presence of Newpark Music Centre in Blackrock, neighbouring Dún Laoghaire, ensures that many students move to the surrounding areas to make attending classes easier, and the majority of the teachers also live near the school.

While Dún Laoghaire has a history of jazz performance going back many years, the current Dún Laoghaire venues have jazz performances only sporadically. This separation of residence and performance space may add to the difficulty in finding consensus in the conception of a vibrant scene. One musician stated with frustration:

[S]o many of the musicians of that age, like in their twenties, they don’t live in Dublin anymore, they all live in Dún Laoghaire, even when they finish Newpark, they all continue to live out there [...] and that kinda stifles the whole scene as well because you have to find a whole audience for your music that isn’t musicians, cos they’re not going to come because they won’t. They’re not only living in Dún Laoghaire, they’re living in Deansgrange [...] They call it the jazz house, and it’s like, come on guys, you’ve positioned this place as the centre of the jazz community, it’s in a suburban housing estate in Deansgrange, it’s like fucking, a twenty-five minute walk to the bus and another hour into town.<sup>53</sup>

Therefore, while a community of musicians exists around the locale of Dún Laoghaire, the scene’s performance venues exist primarily in the city centre where prohibitively high rental costs discourage musicians from living there. The separation of place of residence and place of performance means that fewer musicians attend jazz

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<sup>51</sup> Prior, 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Anonymised interview.

performances, and fewer chance meetings occur, such as those Nick Prior described as being an important part of the urban fabric in Reykjavik, Iceland.<sup>54</sup>

Appendix B lists sixty-three venues associated with jazz. Given the large number of Dublin 2 venues, they appear in a separate table from the other south Dublin city venues. While these tables may give the impression of a venue-rich environment, that perception is not shared by the participants interviewed, who would routinely only mention a small number of venues when asked to speak about them. Commonly mentioned venues were JJ Smyth's, the International Bar, and Bewley's Café Theatre. Later in this chapter, I look more closely at these three venues both for the reason that they featured prominently in interviews and that they offer insights to contrasting aspects of the Dublin jazz scene.

#### 4.2.6 The Concept of a Venue

The concept of the jazz club has managed to penetrate almost all of Western society. One realisation put forward by journalist Ray Comiskey, in a 1996 newspaper article in the *Irish Times*, states:

[M]ention that particular four-letter word to a non-initiate and the images it conjures up will, most likely, be of unsmiling devotees in smoke-filled upstairs pub rooms absorbing sounds too esoteric for the great unwashed to appreciate.<sup>55</sup>

The smoke-filled jazz club trope originates, like the music, from America.<sup>56</sup> Vincent Pelote's entry on 'Jazz Clubs' in *The Oxford Companion to Jazz* is a thorough summary of some of the American jazz clubs that have made their way into jazz mythology, from New Orleans' Funky Butt Hall and Artisan Hall, to New York's legendary Cotton Club, Small's Paradise, and the clubs associated with 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, such as the Onyx, the Three Deuces, Kelly's Stable, and the Spotlight.<sup>57</sup> Harlem and bebop are associated with Minton's Playhouse and Monroe's Uptown House, where Broadway boasts the Royal Roost and Birdland.<sup>58</sup> Other venues strong in jazz history include the Five Spot and the Village Vanguard, in no small part due to their name being on the covers of many live

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Comiskey, Ray: 'Music in a broad church', *Irish Times*, 9 May 1998, Weekend section, 55.

<sup>56</sup> For more on the licensing laws that contributed to the development of the nightclub see: Erenberg, Lewis A.: *Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

<sup>57</sup> Pelote, Vincent: 'Jazz Clubs', *The Oxford Companion to Jazz*, ed. Bill Kirchner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 722–733.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

jazz albums. Pelote goes on to write about the famous jazz clubs in Chicago, Kansas City, and Los Angeles and concludes that '[b]ecause of the worldwide popularity of American jazz, clubs that present the music can be found in almost every country'.<sup>59</sup> Jazz clubs in London, Paris, Denmark, and Japan are singled out for 'honourable mention' and in particular for their presentation of American artists.<sup>60</sup>

A jazz club, as presented by Pelote is a venue that presents only, or at least mostly, jazz. Typically, the jazz clubs he describes have a bar in the same room as the performance, the seating is around smallish tables, the lighting is not too bright but not as dark as a theatre or cinema. There may be pictures of musicians on the walls and the band is separated slightly from the audience by a raised stage. A jazz club in the popular imagination exists in opposition to the curtained stage, rowed seating, and 'concert' atmosphere of a theatre or concert hall. The line between jazz club and pub, then, often hinges on the activities of the people in the venue. A jazz club is centred around jazz as an activity, while a bar gig is centred around the bar, with the jazz band serving a role to entertain the clientele and create an atmosphere. The difference between a jazz club where food is served and a jazz band playing in a restaurant is a difference in the processes concerning absolute, relative, and relational space within the absolute space available.

In relation to the previous tables listing Dublin venues, while an association with jazz does not make a venue a 'jazz venue', it does bring the venue into the scene through its use by scene participants. Each participant within the scene has a different relative and relational space concept of the landscape of the scene, its venues, their histories and reputation, and its participants—the newcomers, innovators, stalwarts, and cultural gatekeepers. To this end, it is feasible to assume that some may debate the association of jazz with some of the venues listed in Appendix B. I compiled this list through my own knowledge of Dublin jazz venues and then added to it through internet research. I posted the list on Facebook asking my network of 'friends' if they believed that I had missed any. I received a further twenty-nine suggestions that I included in the final list.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Evans, Damian: 'Facebook', (2015) <<https://www.facebook.com/damian.evans.353?fref=ts>> [Accessed 13 February 2015].

#### 4.2.7 What is a Dublin Venue?

A local Dublin jazz scene conception of a jazz club or a venue is significantly different than that presented by Pelote. Pianist/keyboardist Darragh O’Kelly states that ‘as far as kinda serious music venues for most stuff, there doesn’t seem to be much. Like there’s no jazz venue.’<sup>62</sup> Guitarist John Moriarty feels the same way: ‘We don’t really have a jazz venue, do we? I mean, it’s a bit of a joke, like.’<sup>63</sup> For Moriarty, an ideal jazz venue would be a ‘two-hundred seater, where you can see the stage from pretty much everywhere and have a good sound in the room, nice baby grand piano and a bit of backline, good drum kit, you know, a sympathetic management who will instruct the staff not to do the till during the bass solo [laughs].’<sup>64</sup> Vocalist Edel Meade takes a similar view, stating: ‘I don’t think that there’s a huge amount of venues to choose from to perform in Dublin if you’re working within a limited budget.’<sup>65</sup> Venues come and go quickly in an ever-changing scene, as musicians attempt to use a space to play, learn, promote, and collaborate.

#### 4.2.8 Location and Infrastructure

Businessman and jazz promoter Dominic Reilly believes that the venue and the location of a venue are ‘on a par’ in level of importance:

[P]eople will say, location, location, location, etc. [is] fundamental to any business, but I think in jazz, I think you can get away with not being in a 100% prime location if you had a really good venue.<sup>66</sup>

Reilly gives Vicar Street (a concert venue) as an example: ‘It’s not quite where you’d like it, but it’s a fabulous space, so therefore it works.’<sup>67</sup>

Moriarty thinks that it is possible that Dublin’s infrastructure may be to blame: ‘[Y]ou’ve seen these places, they’re everywhere in Europe. I guess maybe in terms of architecture there’s not a lot of options here.’<sup>68</sup> He makes a distinction that many musicians make between venues where jazz is performed and a ‘jazz venue’. The Sugar Club is described by Moriarty as ‘a good venue, actually. But it’s not a jazz venue.’<sup>69</sup> Julien Colarossi expressed a similar view, wherein, while pubs could be considered

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62 O’Kelly interview.

63 Moriarty interview.

64 *Ibid.*

65 Meade interview.

66 Reilly interview.

67 *Ibid.*

68 Moriarty interview.

69 *Ibid.*



venues, in his opinion ‘a real venue is not a pub’. While acknowledging that jazz clubs sell alcohol, he felt that ‘there has to be somehow a distinction between drinking and going to a gig. If you go to a gig and want a beer, great, but your main focus is the gig. I think every venue in Dublin has that problem.’<sup>70</sup>

#### **4.2.9 The International Bar**

The International Bar, Wicklow Street, Dublin 2 is an example of a venue where each performance must define itself through the process of performance and reception on whether it is a listening performance, or whether it becomes background performance. The International Bar (known locally as the ‘International’) has three separate entrances: upstairs, at ground level, and an entrance that descends down stairs to the basement (it is also possible to enter the ground level through the basement entrance). After reaching another heavy glass door at the bottom of the stairs, there is a room approximately four metres by seven metres. A bar takes up most of the left-hand side while seating and tables are placed along the right-hand side. Directly to the right of the entrance is the door leading to a single toilet for women and, directly to the left, room for two small tables, seating along the walls and chairs on the other side of the tables. Further along to the left is the door to the men’s toilets. Between the men’s toilet and the bar there is a small space for a band, with a small stage that is raised up on its side to be lowered for when (or if) the band wants to use it. There is a brightly lit digital jukebox on the wall next to the bar, which hosts a wide variety of musical styles including some local jazz. The room is generally dark and the ceiling is rafted and exposed.

Somewhat surprisingly, the toilets deserve extra attention. During fieldwork in the International, it became clear that the toilets oddly feature in the activities associated with performance. The men’s toilet consists of a long urinal and a single cubicle. One musician described the toilets as ‘being known as the worst public toilets in Dublin’. While the band is playing, the musicians usually block the entrance to the men’s toilets, meaning audience members must either use the women’s toilets or go upstairs to the ground level toilets. The manager once asked one of the musicians who book the venue to try not to block the toilets and reportedly built the stage with this in mind. As the stage is not large enough to hold any more than bass and drums, it actually means more room is taken up when the stage is down, blocking the men’s toilets further still.

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<sup>70</sup> Colarossi interview.

Every band must decide whether to block the men's toilets or leave space for audience members to get through. If the toilets are only partially blocked, it is known from experience that audience members will probably try to squeeze through any small opening to get to the toilets, potentially tripping over instruments and causing damage. Blocking the entrance could mean needing to explain to male audience members that they cannot use the toilets and must either go upstairs or use the women's toilet.

While the 'politics of the toilets' has a direct impact on the band, the venue has other features which are noteworthy for musicians. Musicians comment on how the International Bar is at the lower end of the spectrum when it comes to cleanliness or 'class'. One musician invested effort into building his audience at other venues 'and then they come to the International and they really don't like to be sitting in a place like that, some people just don't'. He continued:

[Y]ou wouldn't bring your family down to a place like that some nights, you just don't, cos you'll get some loud drunk Irish woman that comes in screaming, you know. It's not the most friendly environment to bring a family in, so I lost a lot of people that way as well. They just don't come to gigs anymore cos I was playing there.<sup>71</sup>

Other participants stated they found the International 'manky', 'pretty horrible really', and 'not a particularly attractive venue', in terms of cleanliness and decor.<sup>72</sup>

It is also felt, from the perspectives of some musicians looking for a venue that encourages listening, to suffer from its location encouraging random people walking by to enter: '[I]t just kinda attracts a big crowd of people who just aren't really gonna be fucking listening to you.'<sup>73</sup> Promoter Dominic Reilly felt that this contributes to its reputation as a venue: '[T]here's always been jazz in the International, for years, you know. You walk by every now and then, you hear sound coming out of it, so it's always been a venue, you know. In the back of your mind something goes on there.'<sup>74</sup>

However, despite its dingy reputation, the International, at least during the period of this study, is one of the main venues where young (and sometimes not so young) musicians hone their skills, try out new repertoire, stay in musical shape, or simply just play. Colarossi is quite enthusiastic to play at the International even though 'it is what it is in

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71 Anonymised interview.

72 Two separate anonymised interviews.

73 Anonymised interview.

74 Reilly interview.

terms of space and drinking pub' [sic]; however, he suggests that the positives can outweigh the negatives because 'it really gives you a chance to be out there playing the music you love and just meet great people and kinda construct or build a crowd for yourself, cos that's the only way you get people to your gigs here in Dublin'.<sup>75</sup>

Audience members also appreciate the atmosphere of the International. One regular jazz fan said the International was where he saw a lot of jazz 'these days' as 'that's always the, the more kind of, out there, kind of vibe to it'.<sup>76</sup> A regular attendee, Philip Bedford, to whom I spoke on many different nights, goes to the International whenever his shift work allows it, and he takes 'at least one audio clip and a number of photos on every gig I go to, and I've been doing that for, probably over ten years at this stage'.<sup>77</sup> Phil has 'hundreds and hundreds of photographs' and 'over a hundred video clips'. For Phil, it is enjoyable that 'the line-ups keep changing, as people keep changing around bands and then sometimes go to Canada and don't come back or they go to Australia or Japan or whatever'.<sup>78</sup> The unpredictability of the line-ups ensure 'you never know what's going to happen each night, and then kinda these magic moments where everyone's in top form and something just slots into place and you get something that you're never going to get again'.<sup>79</sup> Phil puts the photos and videos into a personal archive he has at his home that also includes flyers and posters from jazz gigs. He feels that it is important to document the scene as things 'change so quickly' and 'their voices change and they change and sometimes they'd move on to a different style of jazz or something and you're kinda wishing, aww, why don't you do what you used to do, or whatever'.<sup>80</sup> He states that he finds the intimacy of the International Bar one of the reasons why he likes it so much and said, with much sincerity, 'you know, we're very lucky to have a place like this'.<sup>81</sup> For someone who attends so many jazz gigs, Phil is outside the 'typical' jazz fan category in that his exposure to jazz has been primarily live local jazz. Conversation with him revealed that he does not have the expansive music collection that many fans would accumulate, and beyond household names is unfamiliar with most international jazz. However, he has attended jazz in Dublin city at least one or two nights a week since the mid-2000s.

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<sup>75</sup> Colarossi interview.

<sup>76</sup> Bent interview.

<sup>77</sup> Bedford, Philip: Interview by author, 30 April 2013.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

While Dominic Reilly initially avoided the International Bar during his first period of exposure to the Dublin jazz scene, because he felt let down by the experience of waiting until 9:45pm for the music to begin when it was advertised as 9pm, he later felt that ‘the guys are trying their heart out’.<sup>82</sup> He felt his relationship with the scene change, and after a period of time would ‘deliberately make an effort to go to the International,’ not as a promoter but because he was now ‘thinking about the act and what I’m seeing in a different way’.<sup>83</sup> Over time, Reilly began to ‘know the guys better and what I like and what I don’t like’, and his relationship changed as this occurred.<sup>84</sup> ‘I’m an old businessman type of individual, but I like dealing with musicians, I like the... pleasant, humble personalities, they’re not dismissive of you... so I like that.’<sup>85</sup>

For Bent, Bedford and Reilly, it is not the characteristics of the space in the International Bar that make the venue special for them, but how the space is used to create meaningful interactions with the musicians and the music. Despite any comments concerning toilets or cleanliness, the space functions in a way that through jazz performance, meaningful experiences are created that make regular attendance worth the investment of time and money.

A reasonably recent phenomenon that has occurred in the 2010s has been the passing round of a tip or donation jar. During the time of this study, this practice only occurred in the International Bar, the Leeson Lounge, Anseo, and KC Peaches. In the International Bar, the management makes a ‘contribution’ of €50 to the band, and the remainder of the musicians’ earnings are made by voluntary contributions from the audience. The management of Anseo, in January of 2015, were contributing €40 to the band fee whereas KC Peaches were experimenting with a system that guaranteed the band a fee but still collected money from the audience via a tip jar. In the International Bar, after a sometimes-awkward announcement from a band member, a jar is passed around the audience members, sometimes accompanied by a band member, or friend of the band, or sometimes just passed from person to person. Again, the relationship between capitalism and jazz comes into play here: musicians often feel uncomfortable ‘selling themselves’ while at the same time presenting themselves as ‘doing it for the art’. In an ideal situation, with the room holding around fifty people, each person

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<sup>82</sup> Reilly interview.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

making a contribution of €5 means a total of €150, which means (with the addition of the bar's contribution), each band member in a four piece band gets €50. In practice, going home with €25 to €35 is more typical. Band members can also get a free sandwich in the International and free drinks (originally one per band member, but this policy is loose and up to the discretion of the bar staff). The International Bar does not contribute to economic capital in a significant manner, though even €25 to €35 can be a useful income for many. One musician who had not played in the International felt that 'it seems ridiculously small to make any kind of (financial) sense'.<sup>86</sup> However, the regular playing opportunities that a venue like the International Bar provides are invaluable to those in the jazz scene, especially those who highly value 'the chance to be out there playing the music you love'.<sup>87</sup>

The International Bar plays an important role in the Dublin jazz scene as a place where musicians can participate in jazz performance in a reasonably pressure-free environment. An evening in the International can range from competing with noisy punters who have not come to listen to music, to a concert-like environment with total silence and attention during the performance. One of the most important aspects of the International Bar is that throughout the duration of this study it has held weekly jazz gigs on Tuesday and Thursdays, sometimes with extra early gigs on Thursdays in the summer months. As Bakkum argues, jazz must be understood in the daily activities of jazz musicians, and, for part of the Dublin jazz scene, the International is a place where musicians can bring musical ideas, rehearsed either with each other or practised alone, into a public space. While for some participants the International Bar is central to their conception of the scene, for many others it is seen as being on the periphery of the scene, thus reinforcing the individual perception involved in construction of the scene.

#### **4.2.10 Bewley's Café Theatre**

While gigs at the International Bar take place on a regular bi-weekly basis, with little or no promotion, often in ad-hoc ensembles performing to audiences who may not know exactly who they are going to see any specific night, Bewley's Café Theatre operated in a more structured, yet less regular basis. Since this study began, Bewley's has ceased to operate as a jazz venue. In a statement released on 6 January 2015, Bewley's announced

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<sup>86</sup> Anonymised interview.

<sup>87</sup> Colarossi interview.

a temporary closure due to the café running at a loss of €1.2 million a year.<sup>88</sup> Bewley's Café Theatre was directly affected by this closure and the last evening gig took place on 9 February 2015. As of 2016, the theatre has reopened in another location, though without jazz gigs taking place. However, I will only be addressing the first location in this discussion.

Bewley's Café Theatre was an upstairs theatre in the larger structure of Bewley's Café, commonly known as Bewley's. It functioned as a theatre during the day, which changed the nature of the venue. Although it still had a bar, a gig in Bewley's showed more signs of an 'event' than a gig in the International Bar. Attending a performance in Bewley's Café Theatre was the result of an intentional decision, and, importantly, it was an intentional decision for everyone attending the performance. In contrast, someone may be in the International bar just for a drink and find themselves at a jazz performance, or be walking past the doors and hear the music and walk in and take a seat, whereas the entry charge alone prevented this from happening at Bewley's.

Access to Bewley's Café Theatre was gained through the iconic café on Grafton Street, Dublin 2. While central and convenient for audience members, loading into Bewley's Café Theatre for musicians with equipment was awkward. The area around Grafton Street and St Stephen's Green is divided into East and West, especially for cars, which must obey numerous one-way systems throughout the area. In order to load in, a musician needed to approach from the west side and attempt to park on Clarendon Street (which has only around five parking places in addition to some loading zones, which can only be used after 7pm) or else drive through a convoluted one-way system on the east side of Grafton Street, that concludes on oddly one-way Lemon Street—odd because Lemon Street runs onto Grafton Street—which is pedestrianised, meaning that the only way back out (after leaving one's car on the street and loading in as quickly as possible up the two flights of stairs into the café, while keeping an eye out for Dublin City Council car clampers) is to reverse seventy-five metres the wrong way down the one-way street. As with all city centre gigs, on-street parking is free after 7pm but parking places are limited, sometimes forcing the musician to park further from the city centre or to pay for multi-storey car parking.

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88 Online Editors: 'Iconic Bewley's Grafton Street Cafe to shut for six months with loss of 140 jobs', Independent.ie, 6 January 2015 <<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/iconic-bewleys-grafton-street-cafe-to-shut-for-six-months-with-loss-of-140-jobs-30885166.html>> [Accessed 25 April 2016].

These issues aside, Bewley's was viewed by most musicians as a good room in which to play. The musicians performed on a raised stage with a resident upright piano. Amplification was usually restricted to piano, vocals, and quiet wind instruments only, with other instruments including guitar and double bass providing their own amplification. Drums were unamplified and double basses were sometimes played without amplification also. Seating in Bewley's was organised with two to four seats around small tables. Tables could be reserved prior to the performance, and by the time the soundcheck finished there was often a queue down the stairs of people waiting to get into the theatre. The small number of audience members (fire safety restrictions only allowed fifty people in the theatre, inclusive of performers and staff) meant that gigs in Bewley's Café Theatre had a certain intimacy, and also seemed full when the same audience numbers in a different venue could feel like a badly attended gig. The small numbers added to a feeling of exclusivity, which could raise the symbolic value of the event. It could also lead to situations such as one with Honor Heffernan in May 2013 when Heffernan knew many of the audience members by name and was able to speak to them individually as they called out comments of encouragement and approval following songs.

Being a daytime theatre, Bewley's was one of the few Dublin venues to have a dressing room. A short maze of corridors and doors led to a small room, no larger than a few metres squared. This space, shared by band members only, provided a different environment for a band than being in the same space as their audience, available for discussion and conversation. In this alternative space, if all the musical business was settled (set-lists and sheet music, for example), then conversation could turn to anecdotes, family life, career, or discussing other musicians and happenings on the scene, including gigs past and future, good or bad. During the interval the musician had a choice about whether to stay in the main room and converse with audience members or move to the sanctuary of a private space. In the past, many musicians who smoked would have used the opportunity to go out onto the rooftop and experience a space accessible only to a few. In more recent years the door had been locked and smokers must go out onto Grafton Street. The dressing room only had room for two chairs and could be full of costumes for the daytime theatre.

Bewley's acted as a changeable 'middle space' in the jazz scene. The family members that the anonymous musician stated he would not bring to the International Bar would



presumably have found a more comfortable space in Bewley's Café Theatre. Playing in Bewley's brought more prestige than a bar gig, represented by the increased entry fee and the socially acceptable behaviour at Bewley's. It would be feasible to include performances in Bewley's Café Theatre in a proposal presented to the Arts Council for funding, for example. By contrast, it is less likely that performances in the International Bar would be included in such an application. In the International Bar, musicians set up, tune up, and soundcheck in front of the audience, whereas in Bewley's Café Theatre all of the pre-performance activities we carried out either before the audience arrives or out of sight from the audience. When it is time for the gig to begin, the band would appear from a side door and make their way onto the stage, usually with applause from the audience, as in a concert format. All of these elements served as signs of the heightened cultural and symbolic capital involved in Bewley's, especially when compared to a pub gig such as the International.

Bewley's Café Theatre's main priority was the presentation of lunchtime plays. The evening shows are varied in style and include music, theatre, and spoken word. The Bewley's Café Theatre website reveals that artists associated with jazz who have played there during the period of study include Honor Heffernan, Hugh Buckley, Edel Meade, Suzanne Savage, Joan Shields, Emilie Conway, Carmen Browne, Róna Sally Hartman, Gina Pukaite, Jim Doherty, Louis Stewart, Cormac O'Brien, Myles Drennan, Cormac Kenevey, Johnny Taylor, Dominic Mullan, Gediminas Karkauskas, Cian Boylan, Phil Ware, Kevin Brady, Julien Colarossi, Barry O'Donahue, Dave Fleming, Dan Bodwell, Maria Seferian, Tommy Halferty, and Ronan Guilfoyle.<sup>89</sup>

Venues function in different ways economically in relation to both the performers and audience. The financial aspect can be a very important consideration in whether to take or organise a gig in a venue. While the International Bar is not considered a paying gig, there is no risk involved to play there: people will walk in off the street even with no advertising and a musician can at least hope to cover their expenses. In contrast, some venues charge a room hire fee to play there, and, as such, put the musician at risk of being out of pocket if they do not attract enough paying customers. Examples include the National Concert Hall, the John Field Room contained within it, and Bewley's Café Theatre. Although arrangements may change for individuals, Bewley's Café Theatre

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<sup>89</sup> This is only a selection of the musicians who have played there, as the website only lists the leaders. I have added in accompanying musicians to this list if I have known for certain that they were playing.

typically charged €150 room hire and had a capacity of fifty people (including staff and band). Entrance to a Bewley's evening gig during the duration of this study was typically between €10 and €15. If a musician was to organise a gig in Bewley's and had forty people paying €15 (there is usually a guest list for family, close friends and other invited people), then after the €150 room fee each musician in a quartet would have received €112.50. That, however, was a best-case scenario since it was also possible to lose money if not enough people attended.

The need to bring in audience members meant that the musician(s) needed to promote the gig, either using free social networking methods, or by paying for posters and spending time putting them around town. Other options included the local radio stations or advertising in a local paper. One musician reported that while Bewley's Café Theatre had many positive attributes, including being a nice room, good sound, and being in the centre of town, the marketing done by the venue in their experience was 'always very disappointing, the website isn't updated regularly, they generally don't update their Facebook unless you're kind of heckling them to do so'.<sup>90</sup> Bewley's has a mailing list, Facebook page, and Twitter account, but the main focus of its activities centred round the 'theatre' aspect of the venue's name.

Bewley's Café Theatre acted as a 'venue-for-hire' within the Dublin jazz scene, enabling participants to use the space to promote their own projects to a listening audience in a concert environment. Although it can be difficult for non-established acts to regularly bring in audiences and income, the venue did work well for one-off events or for situations when exposure and prestige were higher priorities than earning a wage from the gig. In this sense, Bewley's served to establish musicians or groups on the scene, providing an opportunity to improve musical material by performing it. For others it provided a generally low-risk 'concert setting' venue at which to perform in a listening environment often with the hope of obtaining further gigs from promoters or festivals.

#### **4.2.11 JJ Smyth's**

This Aungier Street, Dublin 2 venue is named after its owner, J.J. Smyth, who still works in the bar but most of the management is now carried out by his son Brian. JJ's (as it is commonly known) has all the signs of a 'jazz bar', recognisable as sharing

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<sup>90</sup> Anonymised interview.

characteristics with other jazz bars in any cosmopolitan city. A review on yelp.ie stated '[t]his is primarily a Chicago style blues bar. This is not a place for the posh', while another review ticked off the boxes of an 'expected' jazz bar, writing:

Although the layout is not exactly what one would expect from such a venue (rather long and narrow), most other boxes are ticked... dimly lit, candles glittering in red holders on the tables, rather shabby furnishing, the necessary smattering of the younger cool cats amongst the older diehards, and of course... great music.<sup>91</sup>

Although possessing, for some, the characteristics of a 'Chicago style blues bar', JJ's still has a strong 'Irish bar' atmosphere, with its wood panelling and small wooden bar stools.

The venue section of JJ Smyth's is on the second level of the building. Entrance can be gained through the downstairs pub or through a separate door and up some steep steps. The walls are adorned with seven montages of jazz and blues musicians created by American-born local artist Brian Palm, one on the east wall, four on the north wall and two on the south wall. The walls also have many posters of upcoming gigs. The band plays at the west end of the twenty-metre-long, three-and-a-half-metre-wide room on a stage raised one foot off the ground. To the side of the stage is a door that provides access to the family home, which is above the venue. The family organise their schedules so that this entrance is only needed before or after a performance. As mentioned in the review, candles are placed on the tables and seating is along both sides of the walls, with small round tables and bar stools placed so that approximately four people can sit at each table.

Upon entering JJ Smyth's, the 'punter' (one of the most common of many names for the audience used by musicians) will most often be met by a man named Spanner. Spanner is a bearded gentleman, looking more biker than hipster, who will request the entrance fee. Spanner has a certain amount of authority and responsibility in his role as doorman. The band's income depends directly on Spanner's honesty and decisions that are informed by his knowledge of the scene. He has the power, for example, to allow people to enter for a slightly reduced amount if they have come late and look like they may not enter otherwise, or if the punter is a musician and a close friend of the performer he may apply some leniency. Spanner is also responsible for designing many

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91 'JJ Smyth's', Yelp.ie, <<http://www.yelp.ie/biz/jj-smyths-dublin>> [Accessed 10 February 2015].

of the posters for upcoming acts and is an avid photographer, creating a collection of photos from JJ Smyth's that have been projected on the walls at certain gigs such as the Guinness Amplify promotion in 2014. Although not a musician, Spanner has seen and heard enough music at JJ Smyth's to feel qualified in coming to an informed judgement of the evening's music and will not hesitate to tell any of the musicians his opinions on that night's or another night's music. He will also contribute advice on sound levels during the performance or in the interval, if he feels an instrument is not being heard or is too loud. Conversation with Spanner revealed that he felt delicacy was needed when dealing with musicians, in particular with singers and musicians he did not know.



Figure 5: Artwork on the wall at JJ Smyth's

Jazz photography, like the monochrome montages of jazz and blues icons on the walls of JJ Smyth's, can 'engender feelings in us and come to stand for a multitude of cultural values'.<sup>92</sup> Tony Whyton writes that 'visual representations of jazz have played a central role in constructing an aesthetic for jazz, helping to frame the way music is perceived and understood'.<sup>93</sup> In this way, JJ's can be seen to stake its claim as part of the 'authentic jazz experience' and its place as the home of jazz and blues in Ireland. As

<sup>92</sup> Whyton, *Jazz Icons*, 7.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

Whyton notes, monochrome photography can enact the past and take the viewer out of the ordinary.<sup>95</sup> Specifically, in the interior of JJ Smyth's, the monochrome photograph montages serve to connect the venue to the history of the music, and its clientele to a jazz community, membership of which includes the 'celebration of collective identities or the affirmation of tastes in the celebration of canonical artists and their works', serving as a connection to what Whyton calls the three 'A's: authorship, authority and authenticity'.<sup>96</sup> Jazz icons 'stand for a whole host of values beyond their visual representation', they carry a symbolic function 'in that they are continually invested with meaning and serve both to support and perpetuate jazz mythologies' because they 'support the jazz canon, a sense of homogenous tradition and the romantic jazz life'.<sup>97</sup>

Email correspondence with Brian Palm, the Dublin-resident American artist, reveals that, before he was commissioned to produce the montage works on the walls of JJ Smyth's, he initially put some paintings on the walls of JJ Smyth's for aesthetic purposes.

As an artist, I was disgusted by the lack of a single picture on the walls, which were peeling and chipped, and very grimy. The place had not been painted in years, and the carpet stuck to your feet as you walked. I began to hang my paintings of Dublin street scenes on the walls as a personal relief from the ugliness of the place while I was performing there.<sup>98</sup>

According to Palm, it was he that started a gig in the upstairs room after the venue in which he had been playing was condemned. After spotting a sign for a music lounge that was 'a relic of the ballad era of the 1960s', Palm approached JJ Smyth and 'told him I could fill the place at the weekend'.<sup>99</sup> He reports that JJ was not interested in using the room for music, but eventually agreed to a one-night trial if Palm guaranteed to pay the barman if there was no crowd. Palm was the harmonica player in the Gripewater Blues Band, fronted by guitarist Nigel Mooney, and reports: 'The gig was packed, and that is how it all started.'<sup>100</sup>

After a period of time Palm produced a number of artworks based on jazz and blues subjects, many of which he sold from the walls of the venue. He recalls that at one point

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>98</sup> Palm, Brian: Private email to author, 2 March 2015.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

JJ Smyth's was put up for sale and he removed all of his works. Palm writes, 'It immediately looked like a dump again'.<sup>101</sup> When no sale was forthcoming, he was commissioned to produce new works, and these are the ones that are still on the walls at the time of writing in 2015. Palm was adamant in his email that the artworks on the walls contributed greatly to the aesthetic of the venue, as did the work of the incoming musicians:

We had our own PA, which we brought each week; there was no stage, no backdrop, no lights, no history of blues or jazz whatsoever. I have photographs which prove this to be the case.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*





Figure 6: (L-R) Philip Mayatt, Nigel Mooney, Sean O'Reilly, Brian Palm and Gavin Hind: Gripewater Blues Band c1986

(Copyright: Brian Palm)

One wall image in JJ Smyth's is a monochrome montage of trumpeters Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, and W.C. Handy, with numerous smaller pictures creating a border. A second montage features Ray Charles, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Jelly Roll Morton, while another focuses on Blind Lemon Jefferson and Bessie Smith. These montages explicitly draw attention to the jazz/blues tradition and concepts of authenticity. The idea of an instrumental lineage that is handed down from great man to great man is reinforced through the instrumentally themed montages, while an implication could be read that 'jazz and blues' are musics that belong to the black

community. The one white musician featured is Hank Williams, in a montage with Ray Charles, which places him as imagined in relationship to an authentic black blues/jazz/R&B phenomenon. When asked about the inclusion of Hank Williams, Palm stated: 'I put him with Ray Charles as it was Ray's version of Hank's "Your Cheatin' Heart" which saved Ray's career after the R&B fad died out in the 1960s.'<sup>103</sup>

A further reading could be made in that the icons displayed in JJ Smyth's are not just printed posters but are signed artworks, indicating to the viewer that somebody in the local community has invested time and energy to make these icons—these are not cheap prints purchased at the local store. This reinforces the connection of JJ's with the local jazz and blues tradition. The walls also 'speak' of a further local connection to the tradition, in homages to local musicians who have died. American-born, Dublin-based bassist Shawn Scott Jones and Irish blues icon Rory Gallagher each have plaques, while a bust in the back right corner of the room, commissioned on the tenth anniversary of his death, pays tribute to English-born, Irish-based drummer John 'the Wad' Wadham, who died in 2003. The idea of the walls 'holding' knowledge was also expressed by Ronan Guilfoyle when he stated, 'in the walls there's all the music that's been played there over twenty years and some incredible music that's been played there'.<sup>104</sup>

While the iconography on the walls of JJ Smyth's make a claim for authenticity and ownership, for a new generation of musicians, the connection to tradition represented by such images is less representative of their own sense of what participation in a jazz scene means to them. This view is demonstrated by pianist Robert Glasper, who was quoted in *The Guardian* as saying, 'I get sick of touring run-of-the-mill jazz clubs that look like a museum for dead jazz musicians. That's not fun or hip, and I don't like having to introduce my hip young audience to that.'<sup>105</sup> He later adds:

I travel the world, and most of the clubs have that dead-jazz-musicians-on-the-wall vibe, and it can suck the life out of the present. Not many jazz clubs celebrate the past and future at the same time.

Although JJ Smyth's has more space dedicated to posters for upcoming gigs than 'dead-jazz-musicians-on-the-wall', it does typify the type of venue to which Glasper refers.

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Guilfoyle interview.

<sup>105</sup> Longley, Martin: 'Robert Glasper: "I get sick of touring run-of-the-mill jazz clubs"', *The Guardian*, 8 January 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/jan/08/robert-glasper-winter-jazzfest-new-york-jazz>> [Accessed 18 February 2015].

For some of the ‘hip young audience’ that Glasper speaks of, the imagery and iconography on the walls of JJ’s represent an interpretation of jazz that may exclude the varied influences that they have experienced in their lifetimes and may incorporate into their music. Its strong connection with such a rigidly defined genre goes against an emerging philosophy of a ‘genre-less’ approach to improvised music that is being promoted by local festivals such as ‘Down With Jazz’ run by the IMC, and typified by the multi-genre approach of musicians such as Robert Glasper.

Venues provide physical spaces where the negotiation and contestation connected to the creation of meaning and identity occur, however they also exist within a wider social and economic structure. Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre contends that practices such as jazz always take place within the context of societies and social structures and, as such, must be contained and developed by institutions, for example, firms, clubs, societies, and schools.<sup>106</sup> Paradoxically, MacIntyre argues, since institutions must obtain money and material resources in order to survive, they simultaneously undermine the very practices they support. JJ Smyth’s ‘supports’ jazz by enabling musicians to play, earn an income, be seen, and be heard. As an established venue, it brings in both locals, visiting Irish people, and tourists to not only participate in jazz events but to participate in the defining of a jazz scene through their very interaction with it. The venue can be seen to undermine the practice of jazz in the sense that institutions are structured in terms of power and status: they cannot sustain themselves without the acquisition of money and other material goods, nor can the practices that occur within them.<sup>107</sup>

MacIntyre maintains that the relationship of institutions to practice is so essential that ‘the ideals and creativity of the practice are always vulnerable to the acquisitiveness of the institution’.<sup>108</sup> For JJ’s to exist, it must have as its main focus the acquisition of money and attracting the clientele who will spend their money in the premises, while the main focus of performing musicians is participating in the jazz performance. An overlap exists for many of the clientele for whom the experience of participating in jazz performance in JJ’s is tied up with the environment that JJ’s offers. For many audience members, an evening in JJ Smyth’s provides an experience that is not replicated at other

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106 Banks, 72.

107 MacIntyre, Alasdair C.: *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, (London: Eurospan Group, 2007), 194.

108 *Ibid.*

venues; hence, JJ Smyth's may be the only venue in which they will see jazz performances.

JJ's is the longest-standing venue to have had a continued relationship with the jazz community over a sustained period of time, and this contributes to the feelings that musicians and audience members have toward it. One musician felt:

It's got something special about the stage and I do feel it when I play there, it's got something special [...] [But] as a viewer or as a listener when I go there I just get a sore neck, so if that has to be the first main venue in Dublin then we're not in a very good place in terms of jazz venues.<sup>109</sup>

Ronan Guilfoyle understood JJ's as both a club and 'not a club', stating that it has 'that thing that can only be acquired over time [because of] the fact that so much music has been played there and that they are a music venue and that they understand music and it is a place for music and it is a place where you go to play'.<sup>110</sup> He continued:

I mean, for me it is, despite the fact that it's not a club, a jazz club, it is also a club, it's a jazz club. You go there to play, in the walls there's all the music that's been played there over twenty years and some incredible music that's been played there. So, I like playing there, and I like the atmosphere there. You're never there as a kind of adjunct to anything else, it's always, you're the main event, you're absolutely the main event, so JJ's I like.<sup>111</sup>

The importance of 'a place for music' is reiterated by other musicians. Singer Cormac Kenevey said: 'It's good, it's a good thing, I like JJ's. Brian has put in a piano, it has a proper sound system, it's a proper venue, [and] generally you get a listening audience, which is reasonably rare.'<sup>112</sup> Drummer Kevin Brady spoke of a connection to the past: 'I remember seeing the Wad [John Wadham] here when the place was filled with smoke. The stage is special.'<sup>113</sup> However, JJ's position as Ireland's 'premier' jazz venue is not without issue. One young musician, whose music would be considered within the 'mainstream' end of the jazz spectrum, said: 'JJ's is still recognised as the official jazz venue somehow in Dublin, which I feel is strange because the management in there

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109 Anonymised interview.

110 Guilfoyle interview.

111 *Ibid.*

112 Kenevey, Cormac: Interview by author, 4 August 2014.

113 Brady, Kevin: Informal conversation, 24 March 2016.

doesn't really, doesn't feel like it cares much about jazz anymore.'<sup>114</sup> Another musician felt that although he appreciated having JJ Smyth's and felt it was a great asset to the scene, it was nonetheless 'just a bar gig, I don't really think of that as really a venue.'<sup>115</sup> While JJ's may be a 'place for music' for many on the Dublin jazz scene, other musicians, in particular younger generation of musicians and musicians making music closer to the avant-garde end of the spectrum, felt that neither the audience nor management of JJ's supported or wanted their music.

One musician's complaint began with JJ's shape and then moved to its more abstract characteristics: 'It's too narrow... that's the main problem. I like the fact that it's got a sound system that's all kinda hooked up, and it's got a nice piano and all this sort of stuff, but it's also... JJ's is alright, but it's kind of a conservative crowd.' He continued:

Everyone in those years, we just played in places like the Joinery. We couldn't get a gig in JJ's. Even if we did, nobody gave a shit, the crowd were not really into all we were doing, they just wanted it to be "Play proper jazz", you know.<sup>116</sup>

Another musician complained of the noise of the cash machine: 'It can be very noisy, it's a pub you know, if you're trying to play it's kinda hard.'<sup>117</sup>

In a Foucauldian sense, venues participate in exercises of power and discipline over the body. The most blatant way in which a venue can exercise power over a body is to prevent entry into the venue. A musician interviewed said of JJ's that 'there doesn't seem to be a kind of vibe about it from any of the new generation of musicians, in fact, quite a few of them are barred'.<sup>118</sup> Although only one specific example was able to be recalled, he said that one musician left his amplifier there for two days and 'was never welcome back', while other musicians were barred 'for various minor slights, minor perceived slights'.<sup>119</sup> Beyond barring specific people, staff may also regulate the activities of the audience by policing correct behaviour. A certain amount of conversation is tolerated, but if the conversation is loud and if it is close enough to the musicians to be distracting, Spanner, or another member of staff, may choose to step in. Although a minimum drink policy has never been enacted in Ireland (to the best of my

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114 Anonymised interview.

115 Anonymised interview.

116 Anonymised interview.

117 Anonymised interview.

118 Anonymised interview.

119 *Ibid.*

knowledge), there is a sign at the top of the stairs stating that ‘Table seating is reserved for patrons of the bar only (I.E., No drinks purchased no seat)’. Those who wish to abstain from drinking (there is a charge on tap water) can stand at the back of the venue, or at the bar. Dancing is also not allowed, as stated on the same sign. These rules are not always strictly enforced, but the sign gives the staff the authority to act if they feel they need to. It would be wrong to give the impression that JJ Smyth’s was a venue that routinely denied entry to people and forced them to stand at the bar in silence if they had not purchased a drink, while staff watched closely to ensure that no one was dancing. This is not the case and JJ Smyth’s in general has a casual atmosphere.

Some venues take a completely different approach however and are more flexible in their practices, such as the Centre for Creative Practices, which closed in January 2015, where audience members were provided with fold-up chairs and beanbags and encouraged to make use of the space however possible, to ensure their own comfort. In addition, while the Centre for Creative Practices charged an entry fee, it did not have a licence to sell alcohol and participants were encouraged to bring their own alcoholic drinks, while self-serve coffee, tea, and herbal tea were provided free of charge. Contrastingly, in JJ Smyth’s, the audience must conform to certain regulations in order to participate. In this way, venues do not only provide a physical space and the necessary ‘things’ (tables, chairs, and so on) for an event to take place, but they also regulate the behaviour and actions and, in effect, the bodies of the participants of the event.





Figure 7: Signage declaring the venue's rules in JJ Smyth's



The venue has a direct effect on both the sonic nature and the appearance of the musicians. The presence of an in-house PA is to be expected in most concert venues, but there are many jazz gigs where a PA will not be provided by the venue and may not be used at all.<sup>120</sup> The presence of an acoustic piano is considered a prerequisite in any ‘decent’ jazz venue, and many touring musicians will only play venues that have an acoustic piano. The vast majority of musicians, even if they would prefer an acoustic piano, do not have the authority to command one from the venue and so will travel with an electronic keyboard or alternative (such as a Roland Rhodes keyboard). There are, of course, musicians who prefer the range of sounds available on a keyboard, but for musicians who play the piano in their groups, an acoustic piano is usually far preferable. JJ’s has had two pianos, both bought in consultation with local pianists. It also has a built-in sound system (or PA) consisting of speakers, bass bins, monitors, microphones, (including piano microphones), microphone stands, and leads.

This attention to sonic detail is not a minor feature. The presence of a PA means that many musicians will soundcheck before a performance, arriving at the venue before the audience is admitted in order to check sound levels, both front of house (the speakers facing the audience) and monitors (for hearing each other). The extra investment by the venue is often matched by a somewhat comparable investment of time by the musicians.

Brian Smyth, the manager of JJ Smyth’s, organises the financial aspect individually according to each event. Gigs where the band is guaranteed a set fee are rare and usually the band will take the money made on the door charge, which is typically between €8 and €15. Smyth may impose a room charge on newer acts, which will be waived if a certain number of people attend the gig. Edel Meade says of this that ‘again, if you’re playing jazz music, you know, you’re not going to get eighty people coming to your gig’.<sup>121</sup> Obviously, the number of people attending a gig is down to a large number of factors, and while some jazz musicians or groups, including Meade’s, may have audiences above eighty, it is fair to say that it would be very difficult to routinely guarantee such a turn-out for any local musician or group. The door money in JJ’s usually goes directly to the band, and so the business relies on bar sales to break even or make a profit.

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120 PA stands for Public Address but is used to include all apparatus used for the amplification of sound, that is: the speakers, leads, microphones, monitors, mixing desk, and other items.

121 Meade interview.

From a management point of view, booking less established musicians increases the financial risk. Brian estimated that opening the upstairs venue costs at least €300.<sup>122</sup> Younger, less established musicians may not bring in the same crowd as older, more established musicians; in addition, if they do bring an audience of friends, a younger crowd tends not to spend the same amount of money on alcohol and drinks. Since the door money goes primarily to the band, this can mean the business runs at a loss and is less likely to book younger musicians, or musicians whose music falls outside the management's idea of 'popular jazz'. Over time, this practice can begin to feel to musicians like a divide between young and old, with JJ's representing an older generation of musicians, audiences and styles.

JJ Smyth's is a venue central to the historical and current practice of jazz in Dublin. The history of the venue is highlighted on the website, in particular the connection to the famous Irish writer, poet, and songwriter Thomas Moore, who was born on the site where JJ's now stands in 1779. It is connected to jazz clubs around the world in the imagination of the jazz fan, exemplified by one online reviewer who stated: 'Every city needs a welcoming, unfussy, unfunny blues/jazz bar and this is Dublin's.'<sup>123</sup> The pictures on the walls and the music played within the walls mark it both visually and sonically as a place where jazz is played. In establishing itself as a venue with a tradition and history, it has also defined itself in the eyes of some participants as being in opposition to a younger section of the Dublin jazz scene, which views the need to play as an essential element in their own jazz identity.

That economic reasons contribute to the lack of support for the work of younger, less established musicians, coincides with MacIntyre's theory of institutions within fields of practice as having both a sustaining and corrupting influence on practices. It is not that the booking decisions of institutions such as JJ's means that less established or 'more outside' musicians do not get gigs (though that is also the case), but it does shape the decisions of musicians, to either fit into the established mould of practices already set as tradition in venues like JJ's, or to place themselves in opposition to an idea of what is represented as jazz by JJ's. The positioning of JJ's as a 'home of jazz and blues in

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122 Smyth, Brian: Improvised Music Company Community Meeting, 10 February, 2014.

123 Parkinson, Bruce: 'JJ Smyths—Dublin—Reviews of JJ Smyths—TripAdvisor', Trip Adviser, (2014) <[http://www.tripadvisor.ie/Attraction\\_Review-g186605-d6857154-Reviews-JJ\\_Smyths-Dublin\\_County\\_Dublin.html](http://www.tripadvisor.ie/Attraction_Review-g186605-d6857154-Reviews-JJ_Smyths-Dublin_County_Dublin.html)> [Accessed 10 February 2015].

Dublin' shapes the construction of the scene in terms of affecting the day-to-day lives of the participants and in the imaginations of those same participants.

#### **4.2.12 Summary**

The jazz scene is more than a competitive struggle for various capitals. Within scenes, participants are constantly creating and maintaining identity and meaning, the process of which often includes contestation and negotiation. These struggles take place inside and around institutions such as venues, and, as such, venues themselves stand as symbols for certain types of ideals.

Venues serve different functions for individual participants within a jazz scene. Each venue has its different attributes in terms of prestige, visibility, economic and social rewards and works differently depending on the *habitus* of the individual concern. At the time of writing, the International Bar is an important venue for musicians who value playing opportunities. As discussed, JJ Smyth's has gained a reputation as Ireland's 'premier jazz and blues venue', whereas Bewley's Café Theatre aligned itself alongside a theatre or 'concert' framework and the Mint Bar is seen primarily as a means of gaining economic capital. Each venue serves different functions for musicians and, in turn, for the venue itself as an institution.

Beyond their existence as spatial sites as part of the field of production, venues also function as sites of power transfer. Authority is partially maintained by institutions, which act as gatekeepers of performance opportunity, while power is also activated through the act of performance. Venues serve both as sites of the creation of identity, and as locations where power is performed.

This discussion has examined venues within the Dublin jazz scene as sites of temporally and spatially located practices simultaneously being utilised by numerous participants for individual and mutual benefit. Different aspects of jazz mythology are explored through jazz performance in different venues. Some engage with the concept of a 'jazz dive', a venue where music means everything. Others engage with the idea of the 'concert performance space' where exclusivity is valued. The physical space of each venue is deliberately manipulated in order to say something about the venue and those within it, either by the use of iconography, tables, seating, lighting, or the lack of attention put into these details. Musicians use the space of venues in order to acquire various capitals, and to obtain the benefits of pleasure and enjoyment that jazz

performance brings. Similarly, audience members perform their own conception of the Dublin jazz scene through their temporal and spatial relationship to it and interaction within it. Venue owners, staff, and management all have unique relationships that serve to define their own place within the scene to a greater or lesser degree, either having an invested interest in the scene or with the individual venue. The Dublin jazz scene is not a fixed entity, and nor are its venues able to be understood as unchanging absolute spaces. It is the interaction and processes within the absolute, relative, and relational spaces of a scene that create both meaning and identity for the individuals within it.

#### 4.3 Education and Promotion

Tony Whyton introduces *Jazz Icons* by recounting a scene from the film *Collateral* in which black jazz club owner and trumpet virtuoso Daniel is killed by contract killer Vincent, played by Tom Cruise.<sup>124</sup> Vincent gives Daniel a chance to avoid being murdered if he answers the question, ‘Where did Miles learn music?’ When Daniel replies that Miles learnt music in Juilliard he is shot by Vincent who whispers in his ear: ‘Dropped out of Juilliard after less than a year. Tracked down Charlie Parker on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, who mentored him for the next three years.’<sup>125</sup> The scene is used to introduce how the use of icon and myth informs our understanding of jazz, including the assertion that ‘real’ jazz is learnt through practice and ‘on the street’ rather than in formal educational settings.<sup>126</sup>

The mythology surrounding the ‘great men’ of jazz sees them as artistic giants, detached from the worlds of finance, commerciality, promotion, and education. The day-to-day lives of musicians, however, are highly entwined with the various institutions that help to make up a jazz scene. In *Knowing Jazz: Community, Pedagogy and Canon in the Information Age* (2012), Ken Prouty discusses the relationship of power and pedagogy in jazz education, noting that education is never a neutral activity.<sup>127</sup> Beyond the power relationships between students and teachers, Prouty recognises that historical narratives and traditions also contain power, being able to ‘determine both musical practice as well as what musics are appropriate for study’.<sup>128</sup> The power of teachers and students, Prouty

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124 Whyton, *Jazz Icons*, 3.

125 *Ibid.*

126 *Ibid.*, 6.

127 Prouty, 69.

128 *Ibid.*

argues, to determine what communities will look like through the construction of both individual and community identities, 'is a constant source of tension for all'.<sup>129</sup>

An understanding of the power that is connected to institutions can help to further explore how power relationships within scenes are often central to our understanding of them. A basic premise of Foucault's is that systems of thought move within, and as, the flows of power.<sup>130</sup> While power can be imagined as a force wielded from above in order to coerce others to act a certain way, a Foucauldian reading of power sees instead the 'power of one discourse in relation to another.'<sup>131</sup> Foucault views power in terms of relations built constantly into the practices of everyday life. Power both constrains and enables action, it is not simply repressive but also productive.<sup>132</sup> In the Foucauldian model, power is exercised through the relationships of institutions to the individual.

That the relatively small Dublin jazz scene is served primarily by just one educational institution, Newpark Music Centre, coupled with the fact that the head of that institute, Ronan Guilfoyle, is such a prominent figure on the scene (and also responsible for the setting up of the other major-sized institution within the scene, the Improvised Music Company), means that the power relationships circulate strongly around these two institutions. The 'tensions' that are described by Prouty throughout the jazz community are, of course, evident within the Dublin jazz scene.

Jazz education faces unique problems that are 'inherently linked to the nature of the music itself'.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, Whyton critiques the tendency of commentators to divide jazz education into essentialist American or European educational models; he instead refers to 'approaches', which he labels the 'American approach' and the 'European approach'.<sup>134</sup> More recently, he has refined this idea and now chooses a non-geographical focus, using a 'canonical approach' and a 'critical and cultural approach' to reflect the different educational philosophies.<sup>135</sup>

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129 *Ibid.*

130 McHoul, A.W. and Grace, Wendy: *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power, and the Subject*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 23.

131 *Ibid.*, 21.

132 *Ibid.*, 7; O'Farrell, Clare: 'Concepts', <<http://www.michel-foucault.com/concepts/>> [Accessed 6 May 2014].

133 Whyton, *Jazz Icons*, 154.

134 Whyton, Tony: 'Birth of the school: discursive methodologies in jazz education', *Music Education Research*, 8, (2006), 75.

135 Whyton, *Jazz Icons*, 168.

Although on the periphery of Europe, jazz education in Ireland has had a strong American or canonical approach, largely due to the influence of the founder, Ronan Guilfoyle. Guilfoyle was primarily self-educated, as were his mentors, but it was through his exposure to American teaching methods that he began to develop an educational programme in Ireland. Acknowledging that there are different approaches to jazz education that fall outside or in-between the two extremes of canonical and critical/cultural, Whyton again warns that describing jazz or jazz education in binary terms reinforces a view of European jazz as ‘white, cerebral and effeminate’ as opposed to the perceived ‘soulful, black, masculine and, therefore authentic jazz of America’.<sup>136</sup> He continues by saying that the tendency of the USA and UK higher education sectors to separate jazz performance-based programmes from socio-critical perspectives creates another unhelpful binary.<sup>137</sup> Instead, he encourages a discourse between the different approaches that critically engages with the canonisation of jazz yet does not separate the study of the practice of jazz from the study of jazz culture. Notably, Ireland has an almost complete separation of practical and cultural approaches to jazz education, and largely reflects the situation as it was globally twenty years ago.

The history and historiography of jazz education in the United States has been written about at length. Prouty divides jazz education into three periods.<sup>138</sup> The first period deals with the situation up to the 1940s, the second period from the 1940s through to the 1950s—which included the establishment of curricular activities at institutions, notably North Texas State College (now the University of North Texas) and Schillinger House in Boston (now Berklee)—and the third period covers the 1960s through to the 1980s, an era of great growth, during which time the previously mentioned institutions came into their own.<sup>139</sup> The growth in jazz education in Europe began in the 1960s, including the Jazz Research Institute in Graz, Austria, and in the UK at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, and Leeds College of Music.<sup>140</sup>

Whyton notes that ‘notable jazz musicians and writers played a significant role in creating an infrastructure for jazz education’, and that ‘formal jazz education evolved

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Prouty, 48.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Whyton, Tony: ‘Brilliant Corners: The Development of Jazz in Higher Education’, in *Advanced Musical Performance: Investigations in Higher Education Learning*, eds. Ioulia Papageorgi and Graham Welch, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015), 21–32.

out of a period of social change where institutions responded to different cultural conditions, and musicians had significant agency in stating a claim for jazz within the educational sector'.<sup>141</sup> Despite the agency of musicians in the transition from club to classroom, Ken Prouty describes an institutional narrative that aligned itself with the 'institutional community rather than the jazz community'.<sup>142</sup> In order for jazz to gain acceptance in the academy, those involved took on the methods and frameworks of the institution in order to strengthen the case for jazz as a legitimate art form.<sup>143</sup>

Whyton argues that rather than taking the opportunity to change the nature of education by insisting it address and change its value system to include vernacular forms, jazz writers, musicians, and educators instead adopted 'the rhetoric and value systems of the established order, shifting the ground upon which jazz was understood'.<sup>144</sup> By embracing the values of 'Great Art', jazz educators could lay claim that jazz was no longer popular music for mere entertainment but an art form with tradition, canon, and all the parallels of classical music.<sup>145</sup> It is worth noting that awareness and critique of the concept of 'canon' in Western art music increased following the 1993 publication of Marcia Citron's *Gender and the Musical Canon*, paving the way for a deepened understanding of how the construct of a musical canon serves the purposes of the participating parties.<sup>146</sup> Despite DeVeaux writing about the construction of the jazz canon, Citron's 1993 book, and a continued interest in the topic, as shown in *Jazz Among the Discourses* (1995), these changes have, for the most part, not been embraced by jazz pedagogy, demonstrating the divide between practical and cultural approaches previously critiqued by Whyton.

#### 4.3.1 Newpark Music Centre

Although listening clubs and informal education had taken place in Dublin from at least 1944—and one documented instance, a 1978 *Irish Times* article reports on Dave Cross running an 'improvisation session' on Thursdays in the Project Arts Centre—Irish musicians were 'learning on the job' for a lot longer than many of their American and European counterparts, where formalised jazz education experienced a period of

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Prouty, 52.

<sup>143</sup> Whyton, 21–32, 23.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–32, 23–24.

<sup>146</sup> Citron, Marcia J: *Gender and the Musical Canon*, (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993).



immense growth between 1960 and 1980.<sup>147</sup> It was the establishment of jazz education in Newpark Music Centre that had, and continues to have, a greater influence on the Dublin jazz scene than any other development.

The first date for jazz education at Newpark varies depending on the source, but it is clear that in 1986 a weekend course took place conducted by Ronan Guilfoyle, his brother Conor Guilfoyle, Jim Doherty, Tommy Halferty, Mike McMullen and Ellen Demos.<sup>148</sup> Guilfoyle cites McMullen as being an important figure in that he had studied at the Dick Grove Academy in the western United States and brought with him the American tradition of jazz education.<sup>149</sup> In addition, McMullen wrote the first Irish jazz textbook, which was used for teaching in Newpark. Guilfoyle recalls the first weekend as being a big success, with fifty to sixty people attending.<sup>150</sup> From that first weekend event, the Guilfoyle brothers and Tommy Halferty started Saturday morning classes, originally for £2 a class, which was divided by the teachers. In 1987 these classes developed into a twelve-week course, paid in advance, which in turn developed into a Wednesday night class, which still continues. According to Guilfoyle, the full-time jazz course began in 1995, though the aforementioned *Institutional Review* states 1994.<sup>151</sup> Guilfoyle credits Hilda Milner as being the driving force for creating a full-time one-year programme, called the Professional Musician Training Course (PMTc).<sup>152</sup> The PMTC was a non-accredited certification that involved ensembles and classes. The next component added was the Licentiate of the Guildhall School of Music (LGSM), which was a two-year course added on to the first year of training, resulting in a three-year course accredited by London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama. The LGSM was offered from 1997 to 2005.

The progression to offering a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Jazz Performance (BAJP) is connected to the evolution of Irish government systems for awarding higher education qualifications. The Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

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147 The Dublin No.1 Rhythm Club is reported as meeting from 1944. See: Lang, Andrew: 'An Irishman's Diary', *Irish Times*, 29 February 1944, 3; Prouty, 48.

148 *The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland* states the jazz department was established in 1989, while both the Institutional Review of Newpark Music Centre from 2011 and the Newpark website state that the Jazz and Contemporary Music Department was established in 1986. Mooney, David: 'Newpark Music Centre', *The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland*, eds. Harry White and Barra Boydell (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2013), 576; Newpark Music Centre: Newpark Music Centre, Institutional Review – Self-Evaluation Report, (Ireland: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, 2011); Guilfoyle interview.

149 Guilfoyle interview.

150 *Ibid.*

151 *Ibid.*

152 *Ibid.*

was established in 2001 and replaced the National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA), which was the only body responsible for the granting of awards in the extra-university system. The restructuring of the Irish award systems by HETAC meant that Newpark was able to offer the BAJP in 2005.<sup>153</sup> Additionally, in 2010, a two-year Berklee Track (Higher Certificate in Music) course was established, allowing successful candidates to complete the first two years of the American Berklee College course within Newpark.<sup>154</sup> In affiliating itself with the renowned Berklee College, Newpark gained prestige and attention from overseas students looking for a cheaper alternative to studying in America.

The BAJP is Newpark's flagship course. It was the first of its kind in Ireland and, as of 2016, is still running. The course has been shaped by its founder and largely reflects his engagement with an American jazz education mode, although elements of the course have been influenced by his involvement in European jazz education also. Instrumental studies, ensembles, theory, aural, composition, and computer skills are all addressed in modules, in addition to a 'Rhythm Studies' module. The Rhythm Studies module reflects Ronan Guilfoyle's interest in the area of rhythmic technique, which is reflected in his book *Creative Rhythmic Concepts for the Improvising Musician*.<sup>155</sup> Enrolment numbers for the years 2006 to 2012 (available from the *Newpark Music Centre Institutional Review* document) state that sixty-two students were enrolled for the 2006-2007 year, rising to seventy-eight students by the 2011-2012 year.<sup>156</sup> Of these, six were international students in 2006-2007, with thirteen international students in 2010-2011.<sup>157</sup>

As both a performer and educator, Guilfoyle recognises the tensions that exist between what Whyton calls the 'inherited practices of jazz and the educational environments in which the music is taught today':<sup>158</sup>

I think that teaching jazz in an institution is a compromise, immediately, before you even get into the subjects, it's totally compromised and it's a trade-off. It's a trade-off between teaching the many and giving everybody what they need, and they don't always work out, and you see it every year, there are certain people that need

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153 The role of HETAC was passed on to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in 2012.

154 Newpark Music Centre, Institutional Review; Guilfoyle interview.

155 Guilfoyle, Ronan: *Creative Rhythmic Concepts for Jazz Improvisation*, (Ronan Music, 1999).

156 Newpark Music Centre, Institutional Review.

157 International student numbers for 2011–2012 were unavailable at the time of writing.

158 Whyton, 21–32, 22.

longer time than other people, that's just natural. [...] That's the way an institution works, that's immediately a trade-off.<sup>159</sup>

Guilfoyle was self-taught and states, 'I didn't learn it this way, and yet I was hugely influential in starting this because I believed in it.'<sup>160</sup> He was exposed to American methodology through saxophonist Mike McMullin, in addition to attending the Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music, Canada, in 1986 and 1987.<sup>161</sup> At the time, Dave Holland was artistic director and, according to the Banff website, the course at that time had an emphasis on traditional repertoire and structure while at the same time recruiting some of the world's 'leading experimenters in the jazz idiom'.<sup>162</sup>

The Banff Centre is a multidisciplinary centre that holds the annual 'Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music'. As of 2015, it is directed by Vijay Iyer and has an international faculty made up of leading jazz artists. There is a tradition of Irish musicians attending since Conor Guilfoyle attended in 1985. Other attendees from Ireland include Brendan Doyle, Linley Hamilton, Brian Wynne, Myles Drennan, John Moriarty, Keiran Phillips, Dave Whyte, Justin Carroll, Michael Coady, Karl Ronan, Greg Felton, Sean Carpio, Edel Meade, Kevin Higgins, Matthew Berrill, Naomi Berrill, Dylan Rynhart, Shane Latimer, Cormac O'Brien, Julien Colarossi, Diego Ramirez, Max Zaska, Bill Blackmore, Matthew Halpin, Steven McHale, Neil O'Loghlen, and Carmen Brown.

It is important to state that for three years I served as an external examiner for HETAC/QQI for the Newpark jazz programme, overseeing the examination process and reporting back to HETAC/QQI. Following that, I took up a position of teaching a fourth-year ensemble for one year before resigning due to PhD commitments. During this time, I spoke to many students and teachers in informal settings about both Newpark and the jazz scene in general. Just like the pre-gig banter, I view this type of conversation as 'performance' and a location where identity is constructed and maintained. Beyond mere statement of intent or opinion, conversations in the staff rooms and corridors of institutions such as Newpark become 'performances' of identity,

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<sup>159</sup> Guilfoyle interview.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> RTÉ: 'RTÉ—Orchestras', RTÉ, <<http://www.rte.ie/orchestras/nationalsymphonyorchestra/ronanguilfoylelongbiog.html>> [Accessed 5 October 2015].

<sup>162</sup> 'History of Jazz at The Banff Centre | The Banff Centre', <<https://www.banffcentre.ca/history-jazz-banff-centre>> [Accessed 5 October 2015].

where musicians locate themselves within scenes, and negotiate the value systems inherent in the processes within scenes. In addition, any place where musical performance takes place is a space where identity is performed, created, maintained and refined. Values concerning respect of technical ability, tolerance of the learning process, intolerance of ignorance or naivety and a multitude of other subtle statements are tried and tested between different combinations of teachers and students.

The traditional teacher/student relationship has the potential to be reshaped by the performative power of music within a jazz education setting. Music making between students and teachers is common, connecting the present to an idealised past where music was learnt through listening to ‘masters’ and absorbing and internalising musical codes. Although the master/apprentice system of learning jazz is mostly a thing of the past, the concept still retains traction in the mythology of jazz. Students will see teachers performing both in class and at public performances. For many students, teachers assume a role of mentor, offering an example of ‘how to live the jazz life’, and the correct way for a musician or jazz musician to be. Of course, there is no homogenised jazz-teacher model either; each teacher differs in all respects, from musical attributes to personality. For students who find a teacher or another student who appeals to their (often still developing) ideals and values, the power of classroom and hallway interaction is strong, and contributes to Prouty’s description of the ability of historical narratives and traditions to determine what communities look like, as discussed at the beginning of this section.<sup>163</sup>

It is not only in student/teacher relationships that power and knowledge interact, but in educational facilities themselves as institutions. In Foucauldian terms, knowledge consists of both ‘official’ and ‘subjected’, or ‘marginalised’ knowledges. The performance, production and the cultural life surrounding jazz participants can all be and should be considered as knowledge. In this context I regard Newpark (and the IMC) as bearers of ‘official knowledges’. Newpark’s power is exercised through the activities it engages in as an educational institution: lessons, timetables, examinations, the power to fail students for their absences, the setting of tasks such as rhythmic exercises, scales and essays. In keeping with Foucault’s theory of the docile body, all of the tasks also express power over the body, docility is achieved through the actions of discipline, ‘[a]

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163 Prouty, 69.

body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved.’<sup>164</sup> The activities of staff through participation in jazz performance is another place where power is exercised. In a very real sense, students ‘careers’ can be effected by their relationships with Newpark teachers. These exercises of power generate the official knowledges that Foucault speaks of and although he uses the examples of hospitals and asylums in his argument, he also points out how discipline works through all institutions, and can, in fact, becoming ‘de-institutionalized’, functioning in a ‘free’ state.<sup>165</sup> Therefore, the power and knowledge inherent in educational institutions, expressed through the daily life of musicians, is able to circulate through other institutions, such as venues and promotional bodies, functioning independently of its source. This is not to imply that Newpark is the source of all power and knowledge within the Dublin jazz scene of course, only that it is one of the main institutions that loom large in the discourse of the scene, and as such, flows of power and claims to authority are closely connected to it.

Finally, and of no little importance to the relevance of Newpark in the Dublin jazz scene, is the fact that it has provided regular employment for jazz musicians since it began, including twenty-seven part-time teachers on the BAJP in 2011. Having a regular income is necessary for any professional, but for a jazz musician it can be essential in enabling the chosen lifestyle to continue. Many participants agreed that survival purely through playing jazz was not an option in the Dublin jazz scene, and that alternative means of income had to be pursued if a musician’s main goal was to perform jazz. For most jazz musicians, the alternative means of income was still music-centred, usually by teaching music or by playing music besides jazz. Julien Colarossi described the change that teaching at Newpark made in his life:

Things got so much easier when I started teaching. I got so stressed out because I needed a car and that cost so much money, my first insurance was €1,500. [...] I make about €800 a month out of the school now, so that starts in September, that has made my whole life so much easier, I don’t stress anymore if I don’t get enough gigs. I know that I can pay my bills, I can pay my rent, and my food and everything, I don’t live an expensive life.<sup>166</sup>

However, living with a typical jazz musician’s wage does not appeal in the long term for Colarossi:

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164 Foucault, Michel: *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Sheridan, Alan, 2nd edition, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 136.

165 *Ibid.*, 211.

166 Colarossi interview.

I certainly don't want to live all my life like this, that's something I've been thinking about a lot lately, especially since my girlfriend's moving here. I want to sort out a plan, I want to have a family, I don't want to worry about money. I want to be comfortable.<sup>167</sup>

The jazz course of Newpark Music Centre serves an important role within the Dublin jazz scene and the scene has been shaped dramatically by its existence. In addition to educating new musicians who may continue on to become scene participants, it also provides a central focus for many within the scene. While the physical space of Newpark provides a spatial focus, the presence of the numerous teachers and students also means that meaningful interactions occur that allow for musical collaboration and sharing to take place. Furthermore, the creation of numerous teaching positions has meant that participants are afforded financial security in what can be a very undependable profession.

#### **4.3.2 Jazz Education outside Newpark**

Newpark has seen domestic competition rise, since 2011, in the form of BIMM Dublin.<sup>168</sup> The BIMM group is made up of contemporary music colleges that offer degrees and diplomas with colleges in Brighton, Bristol, London, Dublin, Manchester, and Berlin. Before the establishment of BIMM, young musicians leaving secondary education and wanting to continue a musical career in a non-classical environment in Ireland had few options, of which Newpark was the only accredited course. Many of these young musicians had only a limited interest in jazz that would often be developed throughout the duration of the course. Although the promotional material for BIMM avoids genres, the emphasis is on contemporary music, music that would have been called rock and pop in the past before the current development of post-genre music.<sup>169</sup> BIMM offers three-year degree courses, the BA (Hons) in Creative Musicianship, and a four-year BA (Hons) in Commercial Modern Music. Furthermore, and of vital importance, the BIMM courses are accredited through the Dublin Institute of

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> BIMM originally stood for the Brighton Institute of Modern Music; recent advertisements state 'British and Irish Modern Music Institutes'.

<sup>169</sup> Post-genre is a term that has become more common since the 2000s. Beginning with 'Post-classical', 'Post-rock', 'Post-punk' and similar, the term has gained in popularity to the point that the New School of Music, Mannes, offers a minor in 'Post-Genre Music: Performance and Creation'. 'Post-Genre Music: Performance and Creation | Mannes College The New School for Music', <<http://www.newschool.edu/mannes/minors-post-genre-music/>> [Accessed 22 October 2015].; MacDonald, Raymond, Wilson, Graeme and Miell, Dorothy: 'Improvisation as a creative process within contemporary music', *Musical Imaginations: Multidisciplinary perspectives on creativity, performance and perception*, (2011), 243 states: 'Within the current musical landscape, genre distinctions are becoming increasingly ambiguous.'

Technology, meaning that many Irish students are eligible under the Free Fees Scheme funded by the Department of Education and Skills. Private colleges such as Newpark Music Centre do not fall under the Free Fees Scheme. BIMM provides musicians with many of the same skills as Newpark, and a number of its tutors studied at Newpark and are active within the Dublin jazz scene.

Where Newpark Music Centre provides practical training in jazz performance, there are jazz elements to other courses throughout Ireland, including the Waterford Institute of Technology's BA (Hons) in Music. According to Phil Collins, teacher at Waterford Institute of Technology, students can specialise in jazz and popular music on the degree course, and as three of the teachers hold degrees in Jazz Studies from Leeds College of Music, the leaning is 'slightly towards jazz academically'.<sup>170</sup> Students receive a half-hour instrumental tuition a week, five improvisation modules over three years, and an ensemble class. In addition, there are two history modules of two-hour duration, providing a 'basic summary of jazz in the 20<sup>th</sup> century' and the same for popular music.<sup>171</sup> Students can specialise in jazz or popular music for performance purposes and be assessed accordingly.

The Cork Institute of Technology's affiliated School of Music offers a Masters in Jazz. It also has a BA in Popular Music, which, according to Karl Rooney who designed the course, offers many of the same aural, harmonic, instrumental, and arranging skills as any similar-level jazz course throughout Europe.<sup>172</sup> University College Cork Music Department has performance, composition and scholarship offerings in jazz as part of undergraduate and postgraduate courses.<sup>173</sup> In the capital, Dublin Institute of Technology began a Master of Music in Jazz Performance in 2008, which primarily consists of performance-based modules, and, although the course has a research element, it does not directly engage with new jazz studies literature. Guitarist Michael Nielsen has taught the jazz modules since the course's inception. Although private tuition has always been a part of the jazz scene, more recently, musicians have started to offer group classes such as Edel Meade's 'Jazz Singing Workshop Series' and 'The Jazz Lab', co-managed by drummer Cote Calmet and bassist Marco Santaroni.

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170 Collins, Phil: Private email to author, 30 September 2015.

171 *Ibid.*

172 Rooney, Karl: Telephone interview by author, 9 November 2015.

173 O'Donnell, Paul: Private email to author, 18 August 2016.



### 4.3.3 Tensions within the Dublin Jazz Scene

Within the historical context in Ireland, Newpark Music Centre represented, and continues to represent for some, a break from the past and from the Louis Stewart generation of musicians. From a socio-cultural perspective, it is not entirely without reason. A significant chapter in the construction of the Dublin jazz scene is the split that occurred between Louis Stewart and Ronan Guilfoyle in the early to mid-1980s and 1990s. In my research, I have not been able to locate any written material on this topic. Not surprisingly, although it dates back almost thirty years, the breakdown of the relationship between (from the present perspective) two of Ireland's most successful musicians had a significant impact on the scene throughout the 1980s, and could arguably be said to still be having an impact on the scene.

Travis Jackson speaks of the dyad of history and memory and how, while they are often kept apart, they share similarities such as how the processes 'through which certain events and social actors come to be regarded as historically significant' are not dissimilar from the 'reconstruction and sense-making processes of memory'.<sup>174</sup> It would be a mistake to attempt to describe the fall-out of the Stewart/Guilfoyle divide as history. Memory, however, can sometimes describe the multiplicity of experiences that individuals recall occurring, even when not always being in congruence with one another. Although no one I spoke to cited any specific event regarding the breakdown in the relationship, some sources stated that Guilfoyle's departure from Stewart's working band was sudden, to the point that he arrived at a gig he thought he was on to find out he had been replaced as the bassist. Other sources stated that Guilfoyle continued to work with Stewart occasionally after Stewart had begun to work with other bassists, most regularly Dave Fleming, and that a complete breakdown in communication did not occur until closer to the establishment of the Newpark jazz courses.

Regardless of details, most people who spoke to me about that time agreed that Guilfoyle started to experiment with music that went against Stewart's tastes and that musically they represented two different approaches to jazz within the scene. Gerry Godley recalled that in the mid-1980s the scene was very fractious and that 'for me coming in it was very much inherited, it was a kind of received wisdom. The various loyalties and folklore would be spelt out to you over time'.<sup>175</sup> Godley, as did other

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<sup>174</sup> Jackson, 26.

<sup>175</sup> Godley, Gerry: Interview by author, 29 September 2015.

participants, emphasised the insular nature of Ireland at the time. The lack of access to a global knowledge source meant an importance was placed on the role of individuals ‘as carriers of tradition, or routes to learning. The learning was kind of gnostic then, the access to the knowledge was nothing like it is now, so these individuals that held the knowledge, actually it was power, it was a lot of power. One was very impressionable about what people might be saying.’<sup>176</sup>

Contentious relationships within jazz scenes are almost a defining factor of a scene. Like changing ideological movements, the contentious transitions of the popularity of musical styles (although an overly simplistic timeline) from ragtime to swing, swing to bebop, bebop to fusion, and the ‘jazz wars’ of the 1990s, demonstrates that claims to ‘the real jazz’ have always been an aspect of the music. For example, Michael Heller writes that the landscape of musician-organised activities in the 1970s New York scene was as ‘widespread as it was fragmented’, and how the incoming Newport Jazz Festival created tension within the scene not just due to an awareness of power inequality based upon race, but due to an emphasis on established artists from the swing and bebop eras over lesser-known players, especially those involved in the avant-garde.<sup>177</sup> While tension between supporters of different styles may be common in jazz history, Godley believes that the factional nature of the Dublin jazz scene has been ‘a real inhibitor to the Irish jazz scene, not just the Dublin scene, fulfilling itself’.<sup>178</sup> Whether it be the need to mark out ‘new territory’ by younger participants, or the need to protect ‘old ground’ by more conservative musicians, the need to defend a musical style and its corresponding values has caused tensions and in some cases even riots in scenes throughout the world.<sup>179</sup> The tension within the Dublin scene could be seen not only as allegiance to individuals but to musical styles. As Godley said, ‘you could think of it like Irish civil war politics and it wasn’t just loyalty to one individual or another, it was loyalty to a way of playing over another way of playing. It was kind of doctrinal.’<sup>180</sup>

Guilfoyle spoke to me about a television piece broadcast in the early 1980s by RTÉ that was ‘horrifically dubbed’ the ‘Young Lions and Golden Oldies’, in which Louis Stewart

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<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Heller, Michael C.: “‘Complaining Time is Over’: the NYMO”, in *The Cultural Politics of Jazz Collectives*, eds. Nicholas Gebhardt and Tony Whyton, (London: Routledge, 2015), 17-18.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> In 1960, the BBC broadcast live television coverage of riots at the Beaulieu Jazz Festival sparked by tensions between fans of different styles. See Heining, Duncan: *Trad Dads, Dirty Boppers, and Free Fusioneers: British Jazz, 1960-1975*, (Equinox, 2012), 52-53.

<sup>180</sup> Godley interview.

and Guilfoyle were interviewed separately.<sup>181</sup> Guilfoyle recalls how he was working in a way that was:

[...] project orientated, before there was such a thing, I remember. It came back to me, I was being described as a musical, as a jazz grave robber, you know. This is the kind of stuff that was coming back from the people who didn't do this, and "Who's this fucking guy think he is?" you know. It's this stuff that I became used to later on, a little bit later on. And then, so in the course of this interview, the guy was saying "how..." And I said, "Well, we play gigs and people say, 'What are we gonna play?' 'Stella By Starlight', let's do that..." And I said I started to want to do something which we hadn't done, different material. 'Course the next time I met Louis he's going, "'Stella by Starlight's' not good enough for you anymore?" That was the first thing he said.<sup>182</sup>

In Ronan's telling of this particular story, it was the media that constructed the old/new binary that subsequently created tensions within the scene. While tensions between scene participants are not unique to the Irish jazz scene, the central role played by Stewart and Guilfoyle in the Irish jazz scene, and Guilfoyle's subsequent position of authority through his establishment of the Newpark jazz course and the Improvised Music Company (as previously mentioned), effectively created, or at the very least contributed greatly to, a sense of a schism in the scene. The scene of the 1980s is an example of how jazz discourses are often based around binaries. For Godley, the mid-1980s binary was either post-Coltrane or mainstream jazz.<sup>183</sup> While other developments were occurring in jazz at the time, there was little of the more 'free music, because neither of the camps had much respect for that'.<sup>184</sup>

Although a reading could be made that the rift between Stewart and Guilfoyle resulted in the Dublin jazz scene being divided, it could also be argued that the mediation of the Stewart and Guilfoyle rift by the Dublin jazz scene was understood as a struggle between 'mainstream' and more contemporary styles, something that was being played out around the world. The role of Guilfoyle in establishing the institutions that would

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181 Guilfoyle interview. The 'Young Lions' was a phrase used to describe the movement led by trumpeter Wynton Marsalis in the early 1980s. 'The Young Lions' was also the name of a group consisting of Lee Morgan, Frank Strozier, Wayne Shorter, Bobby Timmons, Bob Cranshaw, Louis Hayes, and Albert "Tootie" Heath, which released one self-titled album in 1960. If considered further, the name 'young lions' relates not just to a young up-and-coming, but implies a level of threat to the older generation, as a young lion is forced out of an alpha lion's pride and usually wanders looking for an older lion to usurp.

182 *Ibid.*

183 Godley interview.

184 *Ibid.*

assume prominent positions in the Irish jazz scene throughout the late 1980s through to the present, combined with the increasing animosity felt by Louis Stewart toward those institutions, resulted in the divide becoming a part of the landscape of the Irish jazz scene. This went beyond the absence of Louis Stewart and his long-time collaborator Jim Doherty at Newpark Music Centre, and sometimes carried over to supporters, both musicians and fans. As with all scene politics and social structures, the divides were not clear lines and people did move back and forth. Some ‘senior’ musicians such as John Wadham, Chas Meredith, Richie Buckley and others both played and socialised with both groups of musicians. As time has moved on, younger musicians are less affected by and, in many cases, unaware of the tensions that existed within the scene at that time.

#### **4.3.4 Jazz Promotion in Dublin**

Knowledge and power does not limit itself to educational institutions, but also circulates through companies and individuals promoting jazz in the Dublin jazz scene. Of the individual promoters, the most prominent are Ollie Downing and, more recently, Dominic Reilly. Ollie Downing has promoted jazz in Ireland since leaving the army in 1986, and has established numerous regular gigs in venues. Downing was the owner and station manager of pirate radio station Jazz FM Radio Dublin from 1995 – 2004, in addition to running an email and phone database to advertise jazz gigs. Jazz clubs set up and run by Downing include the Whitehorse Inn, George’s Quay, the Bleu Note, Capel Street and Le Cirk / Le Basement, Dame Street.<sup>185</sup>

Dominic Reilly’s involvement with the Dublin jazz scene originally came from a desire to start a jazz club in Dublin. With a previous career as a golfer, it was an interest in dancing that got Reilly listening to jazz fusion, in particular. Like so many interviewees, Reilly recalled the significant moment when jazz became important to him, while watching Joe Pass in New York in 1992: ‘I can still feel the sound, I can still almost touch it, it was, so enveloping and I was always blown away by that experience. That was fantastic.’<sup>186</sup> In the early 2000s, Reilly and his wife attended a jazz club in Paris, which planted the idea of starting a jazz club in Dublin. At the time of my interview with Reilly in 2013, this was still the primary motivation for his involvement in the Dublin jazz scene, but in the subsequent period, up to the time of writing, jazz promotion has become Reilly’s dominant jazz activity. So far he has brought Olivia

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<sup>185</sup> Downing, Ollie: Telephone interview by author, 28 November 2016.

<sup>186</sup> Reilly interview.

Trummer, Jimmy Cobb, Ahmad Jamal, Ernie Watts, Lucky Peterson, Charles Lloyd, and Manhattan Transfer to Ireland.

#### **4.3.5 The Improvised Music Company**

More prominent than the sole promoter in the Dublin scene is the jazz promotion organisation. It is fair to call the IMC the most well-known promotional organisation for jazz and improvised music in the country. The origins of the Improvised Music Company (IMC) have already been discussed in section 2.19.2. Currently, the IMC produce the 12 Points festival and the Down With Jazz festival, in addition to numerous local and international gigs throughout the year. It is a major establishment within the Dublin jazz scene and, as such, becomes a gravitational body around which jazz scene participants create identity and meaning for themselves. Up until 2015 Gerry Godley was the primary force for all of the IMC activities as chief executive officer, a title Allen Smith recalls Godley creating ('I think it was a title he liked, he chose it for himself') though he would usually be referred to as the artistic director.<sup>187</sup> Since that time Kenneth Killeen has run the company as managing artistic director.<sup>188</sup> The complex ways in which the IMC are involved in power and knowledge will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

#### **4.3.6 Other Promotional Bodies**

While I would argue that the Improvised Music Company have had the most impact on the Dublin jazz scene, there are other organisations that put on concerts, provide performance opportunities, or provide support in various forms for jazz musicians. Brian Trench writes that Note Productions 'spawned' from the Dublin University Jazz Society (Trinity College) that was setup in the 1960s.<sup>193</sup> Current artistic director, Matthew Nolan told me that the student society was created by Ben Jackson and David O'Doherty (son of pianist Jim Doherty) and that the support of jazz broadcaster Donald Helme was crucial in helping Jackson transition from a student society to a registered company in 1999. In a telephone conversation with me, Nolan stated that it was worth noting that during the mid 2000s, Note Productions, through their artistic director from 2004, Gary Sheehan, was particularly savvy in obtaining corporate sponsorship,

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<sup>187</sup> Smith interview.

<sup>188</sup> Improvised Music Company: 'Kenneth Killeen appointed Managing Artistic Director of Improvised Music Company', *The Journal of Music*, (2015) <<http://journalofmusic.com/listing/06-05-15/kenneth-killeen-appointed-managing-artistic-director-improvised-music-company>> [Accessed 16 December 2015].

<sup>193</sup> Trench, Brian: 'Jazz Organisations', *The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland*, eds. Harry White and Barra Boydell (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2013), 541–542.

resulting in Note Productions being ‘the pre-eminent jazz producer from 2002/2003 through to 2007/2008’.<sup>194</sup> Matthew Nolan took over as artistic director in 2014 when Sheehan took up the position of head of programming planning at the National Concert Hall.

Its website states they are ‘One of Ireland’s leading concert producers’, with two aims: to expand ‘the Irish audience for jazz, world music, electronic and contemporary classical music’; and to ‘bring the very best performers to Ireland’. The quotations on the ‘About’ page of their website stake a claim for Note Productions as the pre-eminent jazz promoter in Ireland. One quotation from jazz flautist and former *Sunday Tribune* columnist Colm O’Sullivan states: ‘They are, already, the best organised and most thoroughly professional of the jazz bodies operating in the country today’.<sup>195</sup> It is an interesting quotation to use, considering O’Sullivan’s public dislike of the IMC, as discussed in section 5.3.1. Note Productions have been a major promotor of jazz in the Dublin scene, putting on concerts by numerous international and national artists every year, often focusing on new and contemporary music.

Allen Smith could also be considered a private jazz promoter, although he has worked under the label of Jazz on the Terrace since its inception in 1982, as discussed in Chapter 2. Smith was also involved with the Dublin Jazz Society as both treasurer and honorary secretary, and was a founding member of Improvised Music Network.<sup>196</sup> Smith resigned his position there in 2008 and continued to promote jazz through Jazz on the Terrace, applying for funding from the Arts Council and private sponsors. Smith states that between 1982 and the present, Jazz on the Terrace has produced ‘way more than a hundred, maybe two hundred’ concerts.<sup>197</sup>

Music Network was established in 1986 by the Arts Council as a subsidising concert touring agency.<sup>198</sup> While not focusing on any single genre of music, it has brought a large number of jazz artists to Ireland and also facilitated many tours, recordings, and instrument acquisitions through the various funding schemes they administer and have administered for the Arts Council. Included in these schemes have been the Music Recording Scheme and the Performance & Touring Award, both of which have had

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194 Nolan, Matthew: Telephone interview by author, 4 January 2017.

195 ‘Note Productions—Ireland’s Leading Jazz Promoters—About note’, <<http://www.note.ie/htm/about/>> [Accessed 13 October 2015].

196 Smith interview.

197 *Ibid.*

198 Music Network: Music Network Strategic Plan 2014/2017, (Dublin, Ireland, 20 January 2014), 4.

numerous jazz beneficiaries. In addition, Music Network runs the Music Capital Scheme, designed to ‘provide support for the purchase of musical instruments’.<sup>199</sup> At the time of publication of their Strategic Policy 2014–2017, the scheme had provided forty-five professional musicians and 103 non-professional groups with funds to the value of €1,060,911. In the interest of full disclosure, I was the beneficiary of €5,500 from the Music Capital Scheme in 2010. Other musicians involved with jazz to have benefited from the Music Capital Scheme include: in 2008 Simon Jermyn (€500); in 2010 Seán Mac Erlaine (€1,532), Francesco Turrisi (€3,048), Michael Coady (€6,020), and Sean Carpio (€1,025); in 2011 Shane Latimer (€2,529) and Barry Donohue (€3,000); in 2013 Francesco Turrisi (€8,033.20); and in 2014 Matthew Jacobson (€895) and Barry Donohue (€6,000).

#### 4.3.7 Funding Jazz

Music Network came under criticism in 2013 from blogger Nialler9 (Niall Byrne) when he argued that the Music Network panel system for the awarding of funds resulted in bias toward ‘classical and contemporary music’ applications over the ‘fields of pop, rock, indie, electronic or niche genres’.<sup>200</sup> The debate that followed saw input from interested parties including Gerry Godley, popular music funding bodies, jazz musicians, Music Network, and the Arts Council.<sup>201</sup> In addition, articles were written in the *Sunday Times* and the *Irish Times*, the end result being a statement from Music Network promising to review their process.<sup>202</sup>

This isolated incident speaks to a larger discourse surrounding the benefits of public funding to jazz scenes and, within that, perceptions amongst many that funding is somehow an insider’s game and is as much about power, privilege, and position as it is about merit. One participant said:

[I]t’s hard to avoid the feeling sometimes that it’s all just a bit, kinda, a circle of people just handing money to each other, but I don’t really

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>200</sup> Byrne, Niall: ‘Problems in the awarding of Music Network’s Recording Scheme’, Nialler9, (2013) <<http://nialler9.com/e71500-awarded-musicians-music-networks-recording-scheme/>> [Accessed 10 November 2015].

<sup>201</sup> Godley, Gerry, ‘Guest Post: Gerry Godley on Arts Funding | On The Record’. Musicians Francesco Turrisi, Patrick Groenland and resource organisation First Music Contact commented in the comments section of the blog. Music Network released a statement on their website ‘Statement by Music Network Regarding the Arts Council Music Recording Scheme’, Music Network, (2013) <[http://www.musicnetwork.ie/news/details/statement\\_by\\_music\\_network\\_regarding\\_the\\_arts\\_council\\_music\\_recording\\_scheme/](http://www.musicnetwork.ie/news/details/statement_by_music_network_regarding_the_arts_council_music_recording_scheme/)> [Accessed 10 November 2015].

<sup>202</sup> ‘Statement by Music Network Regarding the Arts Council Music Recording Scheme’.



know much about the internal politics. But I know that they seem to give the money to the same people. Sometimes you feel like they should just take chances on people.<sup>203</sup>

Other participants expressed similar feelings, with comments such as ‘Nothing against the IMC but they are one of the only people [sic] who get funding’—a slip of the tongue that perhaps reveals the extent to which musicians viewed the IMC (at least in the past) as being symbolised by an individual (Godley), rather than as an organisation.

Criticism over the spending of public money earmarked for jazz was countered by participants who felt that blame was often placed on funding agencies where, in fact, musicians themselves needed to take more responsibility for their careers, both commercially and artistically. One musician stated:

Something musicians seem to forget is that a lot of the responsibility also lies with them to organise their own performance opportunities. I feel that some of my peers perhaps depend on the IMC or gripe when they’re not giving them more opportunities. [...] Yeah, I guess, similarly to any organisation, you know, one person makes these artistic decisions and so a great opportunity could exist or perhaps you won’t be the band chosen for this festival, or other festivals, but yeah, that seems to be the way in any big organisation.<sup>204</sup>

Overlooking the fact that, with the exception of the Arts Council, none of the smaller funding agencies could really be described as ‘big organisations’, the participant is expressing the two sides of the coin when it comes to relationships with funding and promotional organisations: participants are either accepted, funded, and promoted by them, or the opposite is true. If the latter is the case, this leads them to come to the conclusion that either their work and/or their applications are not up to standard, or that their work is not of interest to those making the decisions. For many participants, access to funding and support from promotional agencies is integrally linked to a sense of the self, to identity as a musician and an individual, in contrast to their relationship with the Arts Council, which is seen more as a faceless government institution. Their relationship with these groups can feel quite personal, with relationships developed through time and effort. If the result is bookings and/or financial support, then their work is validated; if not, musicians stated that while they may understand that not everyone is grant-awarded, there is nevertheless a sense of disappointment, at least.

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203 Anonymised interview.

204 Anonymised interview.

One musician spoke about how he had had a couple of awards in the past but had also been rejected, and expressed how he felt ‘pretty annoyed’ when a ‘fairly watertight idea’ was rejected, resulting in having to spend two years ‘to get the funds together to do the project’. He continued:

I just wonder, a lot of people tend to go for the same funding a lot, and I know you have to have some kind of track record—you have to show that you are constantly at it. I just question the way a lot of these things are judged and managed. At the end of the day, it’s a group of people around a table, and if they’re not into your shit then they can just decide to give somebody else the funding [...]<sup>205</sup>

Most of the musicians I spoke to who have been successful in obtaining funding agree that the specific skill-set needed to fill out application forms is a different one than is needed to play music, and must be learnt and practised in the same way. ‘There’s a conception that there are certain people that are funded, there’s a tendency for people to apply and get rejected and not try again, the people that are getting funding are those that are applying all the time. You have to be there, meet them, be around, talk to them.’<sup>206</sup>

A link to the sociality of jazz is revealed here. Even in the supposedly bureaucratic world of funding, this musician emphasised the need to meet and to talk to the relevant people. This of course feeds into other participants’ feelings that the funding culture is ‘a circle of people just handing money to each other.’<sup>207</sup> Some musicians who are successfully funded also often apply or are invited to sit on further funding panels, increasing the sense of an insider culture for those who are not successful. This sociality is also reflected in promoter Dominic Reilly’s statement that once he had started on his plan to open a jazz club, ‘you were suddenly able to have a meaningful conversation, there was something positive to work towards, so people would talk to me’.<sup>208</sup>

The discourse surrounding funding also feeds into the discourse of tradition, innovation and commerciality, with participants often feeling that funding is available to ‘non-commercial’ ventures but not ‘straight-ahead’. One musician stated: ‘In my head [my CDs] would have been considered too commercial, I imagine. See, I’m teetering on the

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205 Anonymised interview.

206 Anonymised interview.

207 Anonymised interview.

208 Reilly interview.

line between one thing and another and happy to do so because at least I can make a living, instead of going full crazy.’<sup>209</sup>

This discourse also entered the 2013 Music Network debate in that the Arts Council Recording Scheme funding was, according to Music Network guidelines, ‘for performers and composers working primarily in non-commercial genres through awarding funding for music recording’.<sup>210</sup> Although also stating that the funding was available to all genres, the definition of non-commercial was one of contention for participants in the online debate, with popular music scholar Eileen Hogan stating that it could be argued that the conditions of entry implicitly excluded popular musicians from the scheme.<sup>211</sup>

This idea of funding for non-commercial music was stated explicitly by one participant who said:

IMC never really took an interest in stuff I was doing. I think with IMC the reason why you see a lot of obscure stuff and not mainstream stuff is that they can stretch their budget further and make it look like they’re putting on stuff. [...] I think that’s a slight disservice to the public. I’m not saying you should have no obscure things, but I think if there’s only one or two people getting all the funding, they should really serve the people a bit better.<sup>212</sup>

Some participants viewed funding agencies as interfering with their artistic vision: ‘Gerry put out the call for applications for Down With Jazz, I didn’t even bother applying. First of all, I don’t want to be represented in that way. I don’t need to be branded or rebranded, cos it seems to be all about branding, like the posters that go into it, there’s a lot of thought, a lot of design, I don’t think it really needs that, you know.’<sup>213</sup> This musician believed that the majority of the funding should go directly to musicians to allow them to put on their projects and cited the fees of €100 per musician for the first Down With Jazz festival as evidence of how the funding does not find its way to musicians.<sup>214</sup> In addition, they felt that their own identity as an Irish jazz

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209 Anonymised interview.

210 Music Network Guidelines as quoted in Byrne, Niall: ‘Problems in the awarding of Music Network’s Recording Scheme’, Nialler9, (2013) <<http://nialler9.com/e71500-awarded-musicians-music-networks-recording-scheme/>> [Accessed 10 November 2015].

211 Eileen Hogan—Comment Section, *Ibid.*

212 Anonymised interview.

213 Anonymised interview.

214 The fee increased to €150 per musician after the first festival.

musician was being threatened and appropriated by an institution that had power through financial and marketing clout.

#### **4.3.8 Summary**

So far, this discussion has described the setting of jazz education and promotion in the context of the Dublin jazz scene and outlined the major and minor players within it. In conclusion, it can be said that while many jazz studies fail to take into account the influence of educational institutions and promotional agencies, I have demonstrated the direct influence of flows of power from these institutions on stylistic development within scenes.

While agency ultimately lies with participants within scenes, it is only possible for musicians to work within the context of the environment within which they find themselves. The power associated with institutions lies in their ability to act as gatekeepers. Furthermore, the power to decide what counts as creative and quality music is exercised through processes and interactions such as the booking, promotion, and education of musicians.

Having relationships with these institutions continues to be an important aspect within the scene. As one musician stated, ‘I’ve burnt so many bridges there’s none left, there’s only a whiff of smoke in the distance’.<sup>215</sup> While musicians can maintain an identity and income without the involvement of any of the institutions, it is inevitably more difficult, and such people usually expressed reservations about the said institutions. Some musicians argued that institutions attempt to take ownership and responsibility for the Dublin jazz scene, whereas in fact they only represent a small section of the scene, ignoring what they do not deem as important. Within this context, musicians attempt to give themselves agency through the construction of their own networks and collectives.

#### **4.4 Collectives and Grassroots movements: Musician-led initiatives**

On 2 February 2011, Chris Guilfoyle and Matthew Jacobson sent an email to eighty-three Irish musicians involved in the jazz scene, including myself, proposing the setting up of a new jazz collective. Over the next nine months, email correspondence continued, the group expanded, meetings were held, and online forums established. Within three days the email had received twenty-five responses from musicians with ideas and thoughts on the proposed collective. Immediately, however, it was evident

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215 Anonymised interview.

that the participants had different approaches as to how they understood jazz performance. In the initial email the authors expressed their own paradigm, saying there was a ‘serious need of a reversal in the priorities of recent graduates of the BAJP’. They continued by saying that ‘developing young musicians’ were looking for work in restaurants and that such gigs ‘are detrimental to your creativity and to the scene as a whole’, while also stating: ‘We are not saying don’t ever do a restaurant gig, just don’t let this format become your sole source of playing experience. What is the point of studying for four years if the outcome is being musical wallpaper for an audience who is barely listening?’.<sup>216</sup> The implication that at least one respondent took from this was that the new collective was dictating a narrow definition of jazz performance and ignoring the imperative of musicians earning an income. Within the first three emails sent in response to the original message, underlying tensions within the scene and the multiplicity of approaches to playing and living a ‘jazz life’ were evident.

Earlier I demonstrated how institutions affect the daily lives of musicians and shape the social and economic infrastructures through which they must exist. This section examines how musician-led initiatives enable participants within the scene to have agency in the creation of meaning and identity within a larger jazz production system. In *The Cultural Politics of Jazz Collectives: This is our music*, Nicholas Gebhardt shows how influential post-WWII US jazz collectives provided alternative models of jazz production, in doing so challenging dominant social and economic paradigms of the commercial music industry.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, throughout the book, collectives are demonstrated as a way in which jazz musicians work together to negotiate the systems of jazz production. A. Scott Currie writes that ‘collectives of improvising artists have most often struggled valiantly but vainly against the conflicts structured into the system of jazz production’.<sup>218</sup> Meanwhile, in the same book, Loes Rusch explores how the efforts of Dutch improvised music makers played a transformative role in Dutch sociocultural life, which resulted in governmental recognition of musics other than the

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216 Guilfoyle, Chris: ‘A new collective’, Group email, 1 January 2011.

217 Gebhardt, Nicholas: ‘Introduction: Jazz as a Collective Problem’, in *The Cultural Politics of Jazz Collectives: This Is Our Music*, eds. Nicholas Gebhardt and Tony Whyton, (London: Routledge, 2015), 1.

218 Currie, A. Scott: ‘Sound Visions and Free Initiatives’, in *The Cultural Politics of Jazz Collectives: This Is Our Music*, eds. Nicholas Gebhardt and Tony Whyton (London: Routledge, 2015), 61.

dominant Western art tradition.<sup>219</sup> Some interesting parallels with the Irish jazz scene reveal themselves here.

Rusch reveals that the generation of young musicians in the 1970s and 1980s used the term ‘improvised music’, explicitly divorcing themselves from ‘jazz’, which evoked ‘undesirable images of commercialism and uncreative, slavish studio work’.<sup>220</sup> There is an implication that the ‘improvising musicians’ were reacting to the established ‘jazz musicians’ of the time who held paid positions and earned money from studio work. She continues to discuss how members of the Stichting Jazz in Nederland (SJN) [Foundation for Jazz in the Netherlands] and Beroepsvereniging voor Improviserende Musici (BIM) [Trade Union for Improvising Musicians] collectives utilised paradoxical identities, being both rebellious and anti-establishmentarian while also working within the establishment in order to achieve funding and recognition. Obvious parallels can be drawn with the establishment of the Improvised Music Company by Ronan Guilfoyle in 1986, which similarly worked with the government establishments while attempting to maintain a ‘cutting edge’ identity. That the young Dutch musicians rejected the label ‘jazz’ yet still utilised it as the way in which their music was understood by the wider community is a phenomenon that resonates with musicians in the Irish scene.

#### **4.4.1 Match&Fuse**

Match&Fuse [sic] is a European network that promotes itself as presenting ‘bold new music from the cutting-edge of numerous contemporary music scenes through festivals and tours, showcasing only the brightest talents through our collective of cultural producers’.<sup>221</sup> Irish producer Matthew Jacobson described how Match&Fuse was a cross border exchange tour network and annual festival that grew from London band leader Dave Morecroft attempting to ‘hook up’ with other bands around Europe and organise reciprocal double bill tours.<sup>222</sup> ‘It was something that was happening in the punk scene years and years ago, in the 70s,’ said Jacobson.<sup>223</sup> With members in Norway, Germany, France, Italy, Poland and Ireland, the collective works by one producer organising a tour in their home country with a band from another country, which is then reciprocated by the other band. After the tour, both groups have the

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219 Rusch, Loes: ‘Pitched Battles: Dutch Improvised Music’, in *The Cultural Politics of Jazz Collectives: This Is Our Music*, eds. Nicholas Gebhardt and Tony Whyton, (London: Routledge, 2015), 54.

220 *Ibid.*, 52–54.

221 ‘About Us’, Match&Fuse, <<http://matchandfuse.com/about-us>> [Accessed 8 December 2015].

222 Jacobson, Matthew: Interview by author, 6 November 2015.

223 *Ibid.*

contacts from each country and the experience of being there in order to build their market there and organise future gigs. While Match&Fuse members are heavily involved in other activities that are labelled as jazz, Jacobson noted that ‘at no point do we use the word jazz in Match&Fuse, kinda as a decision’. He continued:

The bands may be considered jazz, they would often be trained jazz musicians. ReDiviDeR [Jacobson’s own band] may be on the jazzier side. [We are] trying to hit a younger demograph [sic] of people that mightn’t be sure and an audience that we know would be interested in this music and that we feel it might be easier to reach without using the word jazz.<sup>224</sup>

Musicians for whom ‘jazz’ is part of their training and musical life nonetheless choose to avoid the label in order to reach a wider audience, and disassociate themselves from negative connotations around the music, as was the case in the Netherlands in the 1970s and 1980s, and has been the case in numerous instances around the world. Jacobson continued:

[A]t times, I’d have this problem with my band, I’d have a problem marketing it because I feel that at times the music is as close to rock, prog rock, post-rock bands as it is to traditional jazz, bebop, Miles Davis, Louis Armstrong, whatever it is. So, the audience I want to reach, the people who are interested in all the rock, post-rock, prog rock stuff, they are people who would also be interested in this band, but then if the band is called jazz, it won’t reach those people, which is why at times it seems better not to use the word jazz, cos otherwise how do you reach that audience?<sup>225</sup>

Just as the Improvised Music Company was named in order to broaden the scope of opportunities available to the musicians involved, it is often the case that musicians whose involvement with jazz is significant, and who in some ways identify with the label, nonetheless choose to avoid the term in promotional material for specific projects.

#### **4.4.2 Living Room Project**

While Kevin Brady’s Living Room Project (active from 2007–2010) embraces the jazz label on its title page, describing itself as ‘Irelands [sic] Jazz and Creative Arts Collective’, Brady states that it was not a purely jazz collective but represented cross-

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<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*



genre musical artists and also visual artists.<sup>226</sup> Once beyond the title page the website states it is ‘Ireland’s Creative Arts and Music Community’.<sup>227</sup>

The project was set up to create a hub for Irish talent, enabling the artists to represent themselves and to encourage promoters and agents from home and abroad to work with Irish artists. Essentially, this is a collective set up by us, the musicians.<sup>228</sup>

Representing twelve musicians/groups, two photographers, and a designer, the collective was active from 2007–2010 before it ‘fizzled out’ for the familiar reason that, in Brady’s words, ‘the premise of the collective wasn’t being put into place because there were only a handful of people putting in the work to keep the mechanics of the whole thing moving’.<sup>229</sup> Brady states that at the time the Living Room Project was being created he was heavily involved in both a national tour and a recording with renowned American pianist Bill Carrothers. He had been granted a significant amount of Arts Council funding through their one-off awards and part of that application included the launch of the Living Room Project collective.

The aim of the collective was to create more awareness of all the artists who were involved in it, whether by getting reviews or by producing concerts and recordings. During its active period, Brady said that the collective produced ‘five or six albums’, three of them with international distribution and all of them receiving critical reviews in the national media, which in turn enabled the musicians to ‘update CVs and demonstrate there was a community of active musicians and artists of different backgrounds that could work together, cross-genre’. Brady recalls that from around 2006 to 2009 a lot of singer-songwriters were using jazz musicians as well, which fed into the collective.

Based upon models such as the Loop Collective in London and ILK Music (a collective from Denmark), Brady states that the Living Room Project quickly reached what he felt was peak capacity at between eight to twelve artists.<sup>230</sup> What was different for the Living Room Project was the presence of visual artists, which meant that many design jobs were able to be done ‘in-house’.

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226 ‘Livingroom Project: Music Collective’, <<http://livingroomproject.com/about.htm>> [Accessed 11 January 2016]; Brady, Kevin: Telephone interview by author, 5 January 2016.

227 ‘Livingroom Project: Music Collective’

228 *Ibid.*

229 Brady interview.

230 *Ibid.*

We had meetings every three months or so and people would discuss what they were doing and what the collective should be doing next. We did a lot of exchange of information, how to apply for Arts Council awards, Music Network awards, two or three of the acts were successful in obtaining funding, everyone was very supportive of each other's ideas. Some of the records were released in the UK with the company Proper Distribution, which helped in terms of international reviews.<sup>231</sup>

As with other musician-led initiatives, Kevin states that Gerry Godley from IMC was very supportive of the project and offered assistance in the form of office space for Brady, which Brady turned down saying, 'I could do this stuff sitting on my beanbag, I didn't need office space'.<sup>232</sup> Brady also spoke at an IMC-organised meeting explaining the origins and background of the idea. Although the Living Room Project 'fizzled out' due to a lack of effort being put into promoting the collective, Brady believes that the convoluted method of updating websites at the time may have been a contributing factor, and now it is easier to keep websites updated.<sup>233</sup> He intends to resurrect the Living Room Project as a record label at the end of 2016 and regards developments such as the Bottlenote Collective and 12 Rutland Place as spin-offs from the Living Room project.

#### **4.4.3 PRIME Collective**

To return to the proposed Irish jazz collective set up by Chris Guilfoyle and Matthew Jacobson in 2011, it is interesting to reflect upon the themes that emerged from the initial correspondence between musicians on the mailing list. Some of those that permeated the initial twenty-five responses were:

- The nature of the proposed collective.
- The lack of an audience for jazz.
- The lack of venues to perform in.
- The difficulty in attending performances due to public transport.
- The lack of support for jazz by media and government.
- The unpopularity of jazz in Ireland.
- The lack of support of jazz gigs by jazz musicians.
- The interaction or lack of interaction between musicians, audience members, and music industry participants.

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<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

- The interaction and connection between jazz and other styles of music.<sup>234</sup>

Members of the collective met twice in the coming months and the name the ‘PRIME Collective’ was decided upon. Various members set about contacting industry representatives and venues in an attempt to establish a musician-led venue where gigs and rehearsals could be held on a regular basis. These efforts resulted in a manifesto being presented:

- To reinvigorate the attitude of the public toward jazz in Ireland.
- To reintroduce the presence of Irish jazz in the media.
- To provide a dedicated space to develop musical projects as well as a recognised venue open to the public.
- To encourage the performance of all styles of jazz.
- To operate solely in the interest of the music.<sup>235</sup>

Although the Prime Collective lasted less than a year, it demonstrated a desire by musicians to work together to try to change the way in which their music was received within the local space in which they operated. In December 2011, members organised what they called a mini-festival, but which was in fact a five-night festival with up to five bands a night. Shortly before the festival, the two original founders announced their decision to stop running the collective. In the absence of any new leadership, the collective ceased to exist.

Originally planned to be called the ‘Jazz Is Alive Mini-Festival’, it morphed into the ‘Jazz Is...Mini-Festival’. One of the main organisers of the ‘Jazz Is...Mini-Festival’, Patrick Groenland, aimed at an inclusive policy to the festival, stating in the PRIME Collective forums, ‘so far the Prime events have been pretty exclusive—this festival is attempting to go the opposite direction and be more inclusive. Basically, if you want to play, we will try and make it happen.’<sup>236</sup> Accordingly, the festival consisted of ‘gritty

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234 Various contributors: ‘Prime festival —Google Groups’, (2011)  
<<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/theprimecollective/xBghSa5Q4T0>> [Accessed 30 November 2015].

235 *Ibid.*

236 Groenland, Patrick: ‘Prime festival—Google Groups’, (2011)  
<<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/theprimecollective/xBghSa5Q4T0>> [Accessed 30 November 2015].

funk, smooth tones, hard-hitting jazz, acoustic instrumental and experimental improvised music.<sup>237</sup>

The title 'Jazz Is...' implies an active (re)definition of jazz, a claim that the music within the festival constitutes what 'is jazz'.<sup>238</sup> This reflects what could be characterised as a European movement that argues for more ownership of 'jazz'. It has become important to European jazz artists and organisations that their activities be seen not as emulating an American cultural export, but rather as a creative art form capable of situating itself within European (and, more importantly, local) cultural contexts. Although this is at the time of writing a more prominent aspect of jazz scenes, a noticeable move away from a purely American model of jazz has been occurring since the mid-1960s, in the Netherlands for example.<sup>239</sup>

What does it mean when a group of musicians begin to claim a music as their own? Irish music played in Irish bars of New York remains Irish music for many listeners, regardless of new instrumentation or techniques that may be added that would be considered unacceptable in most Irish pubs in Ireland. It is inevitable that the response of the Irish music traditionalist located firmly within an Irish scene on viewing a New York performance would be based on a different set of criteria and sense of ownership than a New York musician who may consider him or herself to be stretching boundaries and creating new music. Although jazz is considered both an American music and a global one, the active Europeanisation of jazz still has the potential to cause discontent and tension.

This was demonstrated by the use of the Twitter hashtag #thisismyjazz by the 2015 London Jazz Festival, when the festival encouraged its audience and musicians to use the hashtag as part of its advertising campaign. The active claiming of the ownership of jazz that this hashtag implied resulted in at least one person countering that position. The late appearance of black American jazz singer Cassandra Wilson resulted in claims by the organisers that Wilson was refusing to leave her hotel room, and counter claims

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237 'November 22nd, 2011: Jazz Is...Mini-Festival with The Prime Collective', Fulbright, <<http://www.fulbright.ie/november-2011-jazz-is-mini-festival-presented-by-the-prime-collective-22-26-november-in-dublin-city-centre>> [Accessed 9 December 2015].

238 I use the form '(re)define' because I argue that the definition of jazz has always been in a state of being defined/redefined throughout its history.

239 Rusch.

the next day of breach of contract by Wilson's agents against the promoters.<sup>240</sup> Attendees were offered refunds and many took to Twitter to voice their discontent. In reply, Twitter user @NadineElEnany, a black academic working at Birkbeck University, London, made a statement on the claims to ownership of jazz implied by the hashtag by tweeting:

To the vastly white entitled #thisismyjazz audience annoyed  
@reallycassandra for not showing up @southbankcentre  
#It'sActuallyNotYourJazz<sup>241</sup>

The tweet received ten replies (mostly in opposition), eleven retweets, and twelve likes, hardly setting Twitter alight, but nonetheless revealing that, in 2015, the (re)defining of jazz was still contentious. The London Jazz Festival, it should be made clear, presents about as diverse a presentation of 'jazz' as is likely to be found at a major jazz festival, presenting music along a broad spectrum of jazz without being able to be accused of 'selling out' in the way in which other large festivals have, for example the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival.<sup>242</sup> In addition, the hashtag could also be read in the same sense of 'this is my jam' or 'this is my thing'.

The rising recognition of European jazz as a concept is a way in which European musicians can both identify as valid artists, not merely copying a hegemonic American model, and also stake a claim for 'European jazz' as a valid art, worthy of the same funding and institutional support as other European art forms. As important as this is for European musicians, it can still be seen by those concerned with racial politics as a 'whitewashing' of a music that has a legacy that is strongly connected to black American culture. Just as musicology and academia in general are now aware of the legacy of colonialism and how it influences narratives of historiography, it is important that we are equally aware of the responsibilities that exist in (re)defining jazz as a contemporary practice.

However unsuccessful the PRIME Collective was in achieving the aims set out in its manifesto, the activity it generated did lead to other things. In the time between the

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240 Rees, Thomas: 'Cassandra Wilson/Lionel Loueke, Royal Festival Hall | New music reviews, news & interviews | The Arts Desk', *theartsdesk.com*, 19 November 2015 <<http://www.theartsdesk.com/new-music/cassandra-wilsonlionel-loueke-royal-festival-hall>> [accessed 17 August 2016].

241 ElEnany, Nadine: Twitter, <<https://twitter.com/NadineElEnany/status/666000845130080256>> [Accessed 9 December 2015].

242 See Clayton-Lea, Tony: 'All that jazz? Cork festival's programme divides fans', *Irish Times*, 26 October 2015, 3.

setting up of the PRIME Collective and its demise, Gerry Godley from the Improvised Music Company, who was aware of the group email correspondences and the tensions within them, organised a meeting with some of the ‘main players’ within the Dublin jazz scene. Saxophonist, composer and founder of [dublinjazz.ie](http://dublinjazz.ie), Katherine Wyers, remembers that the idea was not to focus on the differences between participants but to try to find common aims and ways of working together, facilitated to some degree by the IMC. Shane Latimer remembers it as a series of meetings in which Godley was trying to ‘instigate and ignite some kind of musician-led activity’.<sup>243</sup> This eventually led to the establishment of 12 Rutland Place.

#### **4.4.4 12 Rutland Place**

12 Rutland Place is a building on Dublin’s north side, in Dublin 1. The venue had previously been known as ‘Hello Operator’, under the management of artists Jack Phelan and Erin Michelle Hermosa. Jazz and improvised music gigs had previously taken place there under their aegis. When the building was vacated, Latimer recalls approaching Godley and proposing that it could be the kind of opportunity for which the participants in Godley’s meetings had been looking. Six band leaders were originally involved: Matthew Jacobson, Dennis Cassidy, Cormac O’Brian, Paddy Groenland, Chris Guilfoyle and Latimer. Each member paid one twelfth of the rent and IMC covered the other half and the deposit. This arrangement stayed in place for six months before the IMC stopped being involved. In an interview with [totallydublin.ie](http://totallydublin.ie), Groenland said that they were trying to emulate Continental models, pointing out that in ‘quite a few other European cities there is at least one general space like this for improvised music’.<sup>244</sup> As Groenland stated in an interview with me:

Rutland Place is interesting because it’s a lot of people working together who don’t necessarily want to work together, like we’re not all friends, but that’s fine actually, that’s actually a triumph you know.<sup>245</sup>

For Latimer, the benefits of having ‘ownership’ of a space went far beyond just having a regular place to put on gigs:

From our experience, it certainly helped us go up a level in terms of our stage production. Being able to go somewhere and leave our equipment

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243 Latimer, Shane: Telephone interview by author, 15 December 2015.

244 Groenland, Patrick as quoted in McNeela, Niamh: ‘All That (Free) Jazz: #12 Rutland Place’, *Totally Dublin*, (2013) <<http://totallydublin.ie/music/free-jazz-12-rutland-place/>> [Accessed 15 December 2015].

245 Groenland interview.

in situ, and come back the next night and do it again. Also, being able to play to a [volume] level of a real gig, rather than the amateur thing of topping and tailing everything in someone's lounge and then going, "It'll be alright on the night cos we're jazz musicians".<sup>246</sup>

12 Rutland Place did not, and was not supposed to, appeal to everyone. The location is outside of the city centre, in an area that some would consider unsafe. Promoter Dominic Reilly stated: 'I'll be shocked if I ever find my way there.' For Reilly, the location was too much of a risk:

[I]'m a Dublin person, I feel relatively safe, but how can I go back to my wife and explain to her that something happened, I was mugged on the way, the car was broken into [...] I just can't justify being there in the first place.<sup>247</sup>

The atypical location (being located outside the city centre) meant that 12 Rutland Place attracted people who were willing to make an effort to see this music, which helped to ensure that it was a venue for what Groenland described as 'our people'.<sup>248</sup> This typically consisted of a younger, non-traditional jazz audience, which reflected the demographic of the participants.

It perhaps speaks to the fragmented condition of the Dublin jazz scene that it took first a failed collective and then the intervention of a funded establishment in order to set up 12 Rutland Place as a viable rehearsal/performance venue. After the departure of the IMC from the arrangements, 12 Rutland Place ran for another six months before needing to vacate the premises due to the ceiling collapsing. At first, the members tried to negotiate with the landlords to have the ceiling repaired, until negotiations broke down and solicitors were called in by the collective in order to prevent threats that their equipment would be thrown out. 'It was a bit of a disaster in the end,' Latimer recalls,<sup>249</sup> concerning the deteriorating relationship with the landlords. However, he agrees that it was a success in terms of different aspects of the jazz/improvised music community working together: '[A]lthough we weren't all reading off the same page, at least we were reading from the same book.'<sup>250</sup>

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246 Latimer, Telephone interview.

247 Reilly interview.

248 McNeela.

249 Latimer, Telephone interview.

250 *Ibid.*



#### 4.4.5 Bottlenote Collective

While the PRIME Collective was an attempt to mobilise an entire community of jazz musicians, and 12 Rutland Place focused on six original founders and their bands, and evolved into ten invested members by the time the roof literally fell in, the Bottlenote Collective, while incorporating many people into its activities, is presently run by only three people: Justin Carroll, Seán Mac Erlaine, and Shane Latimer. Originally set up through a meeting called by Daniel Jacobson, brother of Matthew and founding member of Diatribe Records, and designed to be a performance ‘sister’ to the record label, Jacobson went on sabbatical shortly after the establishment of the Bottlenote. The collective grew to ten people but Seán Mac Erlaine recalls that, after numerous attempts at cajoling members into activity, he eventually made the ‘dictatorial’ decision to cull membership to the most active three members in order to have a fair distribution of the workload.<sup>251</sup>

Some of the earliest Bottlenote Collective performances were at the Joy Gallery, also on Rutland Place, and run by the same people who ran 12 Rutland Place when it was known as Hello Operator. In 2009, the Bottlenote Collective produced its first festival with Arts Council and IMC funding. Latimer says that their mission statement is to curate improvising Irish musicians alongside their international counterparts, in collaboration, or side by side. Previous years saw the collective focus more on process, but cuts in funding, in recent years, have made it focus on presenting a ‘show’. While traditional jazz promotion has highlighted a ‘great artist’ who needs to be heard, the Bottlenote Collective rather try to produce an event of artistic significance, such as working with the Irish Film Archive or focusing on architectural significance, and then ‘ambush’ the audience with their music within that context.<sup>252</sup>

However, while certainly a ‘grassroots’ operation, the Bottlenote Collective is not a collective in the sense of all members contributing equally. Although other people are involved extensively and over time with the ‘collective’, the three core members take on all of the non-musical workload, of which, Latimer notes, there is much. In addition, individual members may promote their own projects under the Bottlenote name—projects that may have little involvement from the other members.

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251 Mac Erlaine, Seán: Telephone interview by author, 16 December 2015.

252 *Ibid.*

#### 4.4.6 Dublinjazz.ie

An increased amount of agency was acquired by musicians with the development of the World Wide Web and in particular Web 2.0, in which organisations such as Facebook, MySpace and websites such as Wordpress made the dissemination of information possible by artists who previously had to rely on other bodies for promotion and marketing. Katherine Wyers, founder of the website [www.dublinjazz.ie](http://www.dublinjazz.ie), recalls that in 2011, when she set up [dublinjazz.ie](http://dublinjazz.ie), jazz gigs were mostly being promoted using Facebook Events. Although a very useful tool for letting virtual circles of friends and acquaintances know about events that might interest them, Facebook Events was not a facility good at moving beyond the already established audience for an event and creating new audiences. The *Irish Times* gig guide had stopped listing jazz gigs around the same time and Katherine, who had a background in marketing as well as music performance, saw an opportunity for musicians to list their gigs easily, with little notice (the *Irish Times* needed at least two weeks prior notice), and to centralise listings of Irish jazz gigs. In addition, Katherine started a short-lived podcast featuring the music of Irish artists.

Katherine experienced frustration that venues, JJ Smyth's in particular, did not want to list their gigs using the online system. She remembers that when she contacted Brian Smyth from JJ Smyth's he said that the gig information was on his website and she could copy and paste it if she wished, but she was not prepared to do that. Although she communicated that [dublinjazz.ie](http://dublinjazz.ie) was attracting considerable traffic, some people were not prepared to go through the simple process of listing their gigs. Wyers was actively involved in both PRIME Collective and the beginnings of 12 Rutland Place at the time she was setting up [dublinjazz.ie](http://dublinjazz.ie) and said:

it bugged me that people argued an awful lot. [...] What I saw was that people needed to advertise correctly. There was a lack of attention on attracting an audience and too much effort on producing creative concerts.<sup>253</sup>

After running [dublinjazz.ie](http://dublinjazz.ie) for two years, Wyers was approached by promoter Dominic Reilly, who offered to buy the website from her—an offer she accepted.

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253 Wyers, Katherine: Interview by author, 10 December 2015.

#### 4.4.7 Boom Boom Room

Other musician-led activities include the Boom Boom Room, a venue located upstairs in Conway's Pub on Parnell Street, run by musician and promoter Kenneth Killeen, now managing artistic director of the Improvised Music Company. Kenneth attended Newpark as a mature student, and felt that to play music full-time at a high level would require 'a lot more years', although he still wanted to be involved in the scene.<sup>254</sup> He felt that problems with the scene lay in infrastructure rather than with musicians and went about setting up the Boom Boom Room as a venue. Killeen says that audience numbers were always a problem for the 'jazz night', but the venue soon took off on the other nights, with the venue gaining a reputation as an underground haunt that featured improvised contemporary music of a non-classical nature.<sup>255</sup> The Boom Boom Room ran under Killeen from 2001 until 2004, when he took up employment at the IMC as an assistant to Gerry Godley. At this point he handed over management of the venue to Seán Mac Erlaine, Dylan Rynhart, and Nick Roth, who continued between one and two nights of music a week for over a year as the KaBoom Collective. Killeen believes the success of the Boom Boom Room came from it having no 'baggage' attached to it, saying that 'people have a preconceived notion of a space before they walk into a place. JJ's, as much as the National Concert Hall.'<sup>256</sup>

The Boom Boom Room continued for a time under the KaBoom Collective. Mac Erlaine remembers that he had been playing in the place quite a lot, 'on the jazz nights and the free improv nights, when the jazz guys wouldn't go there, he [Killeen] probably approached me'.<sup>257</sup> He continues, 'at most we put on maybe two nights a week, it was pretty healthy, actually, it was handy to be handed this mailing list'. Mac Erlaine is unsure how the collective ended, 'We either got tired or the place closed down. The place did close down eventually.'

#### 4.4.8 Record Labels

A musician-led project that has had considerable success and longevity is Diatribe Records. Founded by Daniel Jacobson and John Cosgrove in 1995, Diatribe Records was dormant until 2007, when it released *Zoid Versus the Jazz Musicians of Ireland*. In 2012/2013, Daniel Jacobson left due to time constraints and Nik Roth took over his

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254 Killeen, Kenneth: Telephone interview by author, 5 January 2016.

255 *Ibid.*

256 *Ibid.*

257 Mac Erlaine interview.

role. Cosgrove left in 2007 and Matthew Jacobson has taken on a more administrative role in the meantime. Matthew Jacobson stated in an interview with me that they share ‘similar aims to the IMC’ in their desire to put out ‘good music from Ireland, get people in Ireland to hear it, and the next step is to bring it abroad’.<sup>258</sup> He continued: ‘We don’t care about genre or style or what anybody’s calling it, we are just looking for people saying something.’<sup>259</sup> Jacobson states that they are often approached with music that they like and respect, but ‘we don’t think it’s particularly new so...’<sup>260</sup> In addition to innovation and ‘newness’ being important to those involved in Diatribe Records, Jacobson says that it is also important to them to have a high level of quality throughout the process, from production to design. In addition, they aim to record and release music that ‘might not get made otherwise’ and are moving toward curating music themselves, the first of these being a solo series.<sup>261</sup>

Other record labels include the now defunct Livia label and the currently dormant IMC label. The Livia label produced mostly Louis Stewart albums from 1977 until 1988. The Improvised Music Company released seventeen albums between 1995 and 2008, including fourteen releases that included IMC founder, Ronan Guilfoyle. Lyte Records, established and run by drummer David Lyttle, releases jazz and urban recordings, including those by Irish jazz musicians Michael Buckley, Nigel Mooney, Michael Nielsen, John Moriarty, and Linley Hamilton.

#### **4.4.9 Summary**

It is interesting to note that all of the musician-led initiatives in this section have been run by a younger generation of musicians, the majority of whom place an importance on innovation and creativity. Correspondingly, these same musicians, while no doubt part of the jazz scene, often actively avoid the label ‘jazz’. It is not difficult to understand why, as ‘jazz’ often fails as a label that serves any useful purpose for these artists. For many of these musicians, ‘jazz’ has connotations, not only in a global sense, but in a very local sense, to a scene that they have not necessarily been fully accepted into, and so have had to create alternatives, out of necessity, in order to perform and develop an audience. Many of the artists who are involved in collective activities are not as concerned with achieving mainstream success through the pathways that have been

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258 Jacobson interview.

259 *Ibid.*

260 *Ibid.*

261 *Ibid.*

made by an older generation of musicians, but place importance on notions of creativity, innovation, and working outside traditional boundaries. In this respect, they pursue performance opportunities that are not tied to the economics of selling alcohol—that is, performing primarily in pubs.

While there may be many precedents such as the Irish Rhythm Club, the South Dublin Rhythm Club, the Irish Federation of Musicians, the Dublin Jazz Society, the Irish Jazz Society, *Irish Jazz News* magazine, and the Improvised Music Company, collectives have not formed a strong part of the Irish jazz identity. There is a question to be asked of how useful the term ‘collective’ is to describe these endeavours. However, musicians based in Ireland have demonstrated numerous examples of attempts to take control of the production of their music, and to find alternatives to the traditional pub scene, though most efforts have been short-lived and the results varied. Although many achieve short-term aims, the Dublin jazz scene does not have a collective identity that it is able to use to leverage preferable working conditions, nor does it have a strong tradition of improvising/jazz artists working together for artistic purposes similar to other European countries that are quoted as models. It should be noted that the more successful collective projects have often been undertaken by those who identify more strongly with the ‘improvised music’ label, though not only those associated with the Improvised Music Company. The IMC are, however, often found to be working side-by-side with these musicians, and many of the musicians involved in musician-led activities can be found represented at the Down With Jazz festival, which I will examine in detail in the discussion that follows.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

Chapter 4 has investigated the production of jazz performance taking into account the interaction between institutions and individuals in shaping the construction of a scene and meaning and identity within it. I have looked at how individual pathways are enabled and constrained by the overarching existence and influence of venues, educational and promotional institutions and musician-led initiatives. The discourse of the Dublin jazz scene is created in relation to such bodies.

The production of jazz within the context of a jazz scene is largely based around venues, and it is at these locations where meaning and identity is created. Venues are not a passive site for jazz production however. They are utilised by individuals for their own

purposes as they attempt to represent what is important to them through jazz performance. Jazz venues bring to the fore issues in jazz concerning the contestation and negotiation between both individual and institution and between different individuals within the scene. These often reveal themselves in the form of power relationships that are further highlighted through educational and promotional bodies as they take an active role in publicly displaying their version of what jazz is and how it should be understood.

Individuals interact with educational and promotion institutions in a different way than with venues. While venues are primarily a site of performance, educational and promotional institutions could be said to have a more profound impact on the scene, especially in the way that individuals understand the influence these institutions can have, and often identify with them or in opposition to them. This understanding is not a binary one however, and individuals' relationships with educational institutions and promotional agencies are at once complex and multi-layered. Nonetheless, these institutions wield power in many ways, both in the complex, flows of power through discourse, as understood by Foucault, and in the very direct way of controlling who gets gigs, grants and jobs.

Lastly, I examined efforts by individuals to gain and maintain control of the production of jazz through the setting up of collectives and musician-led initiatives. In a culture where power is expressed both in a Foucauldian sense of moving through discourse and in more direct ways, such as financial capital or the direct power to book musicians and groups for engagements, individuals and groups of individuals seek to gain control over their own production of jazz, from finance through to promotion. While these efforts are sometimes still tied to institutions, they represent efforts of jazz scene participants to take control of their own production and identity.

## Chapter 5: Improvised Music Company Case Study

### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presents the Improvised Music Company as a case study, providing three specific examples relating to the organisations structure, activities and politics within the Dublin jazz scene that illustrate issues around the concepts of power, authority and agency. This addresses the research question of ‘How is meaning and identity created within the Dublin jazz scene?’ by demonstrating the role that institutions in general have upon the processes of music production. Examining the complex ways in which the IMC enter into processes of negotiation and contestation with the wider scene gives insight into the numerous interactions that occur between participants and institutions, revealing how power and knowledge are central to participation within a scene.

### 5.2 ‘Kind of Green’ – A New Wave of Irish Jazz

In an April 2014 article in the Irish *Sunday Times* ‘Culture magazine’, journalist Mel Clarke wrote ‘A new age of jazz is being spawned by an exciting and innovative crop of Irish Musicians,’ he continued that a ‘new wave of Irish jazz,’ is ‘slowly winning over fans of supposedly hipper music.’<sup>1</sup> The article articulates an implied (and often used) dualism of creativity and innovation in opposition to tradition and places the discourses concerning these dichotomies within institutions of power, in this case, the IMC and the jazz course in Newpark. It demonstrates how binaries are often used in jazz discourse to serve specific purposes but often do not reflect the complexity of the lived experience of participants within jazz scenes.

Mel Clarke’s article fulfils its presumed aim of highlighting the selected artists to a national audience but frames the discourse within a binary of old/new. Such dualisms fail to recognise the merit and contributions of both older generations of musicians and the numerous peers of the musicians within the piece whose work is considered outside the scope of aforementioned article. It is correct that the talent and music of the musicians in the article should gain exposure and media coverage. What is unfortunate and unhelpful is the dichotomy that is constructed in order to promote the musicians, and the implied negative connotations on any music that does not fit within the ‘new age of jazz’ label.<sup>2</sup> While no article can represent all aspects of a jazz scene, this writing

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1 Clarke, Mel: ‘Kind of green’, *Sunday Times Culture Magazine*, 6 April 2014, 24-25.

2 *Ibid.*, 24.



gives the impression that any important new music coming from the Dublin jazz scene is inherently 'post-jazz' and either multi-genre or post-genre, effectively dismissing any musicians who identify strongly with a conception of jazz tradition while still being 'exciting and innovative'.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, it feeds into the already existing assumption within the scene of a separation between Newpark, the IMC and participants outside of those sub-scenes, an assumption that can only lead to further division and lack of cohesion within the scene.

The first musician mentioned in the article is Shane Latimer, a Newpark teacher and graduate, and member of OKO, a Dublin 'post-jazz outfit'.<sup>4</sup> Shane speaks about a 'proliferation of styles in the improvised music scene'.<sup>5</sup> Their music draws from 'kraut rock', 'hip-hop', 'vintage television shows' and is 'built on the loose grooves and tight hooks of jazz'.<sup>6</sup> Another group, Alarmist, 'personify jazz's willingness to absorb myriad influences' by 'melding electronica with Morton Feldman and Thelonious Monk'.<sup>7</sup> Sean Carpio 'bends jazz's already flexible boundaries' and the 'fusion unit' This is How We Fly deal in 'folk rhythms and electronica beats'.<sup>8</sup> Further descriptors within the article include 'math infused rock', 'electronica', 'blissed out', 'brash brand of improvised hip-hop', 'disco', 'funk', 'reggae', and 'Afrobeat', which are 'infectious, intelligent work' and 'challenging orthodox thinking'.<sup>9</sup> The defining element of the 'new wave of Irish jazz' seems to be aspects of the music that hitherto would have differentiated the music from jazz for many listeners.<sup>10</sup>

By contrast, these 'exciting and innovative' musicians are juxtaposed with 'the straight ahead jazz of Louis Stewart', 'the highly specialised rhythms of Nielsen' and the 'long standing biases' of, for example, the manager of Dublin venue JJ Smyth's, Brian Smyth, who is 'an old-schooler who has a preference for "upbeat, in your face" bands such as Spectrum'.<sup>11</sup> In this reading of the jazz scene, the innovative young musicians with connections to Newpark and the IMC are placed in opposition to the 'old-schoolers' who are represented with statements such as 'Clearly there is much more to

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3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*, 25.

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Ibid.*, 24-25.

10 *Ibid.*, 24.

11 *Ibid.*

contemporary Irish jazz than Louis Stewart and the annual drinkathon that is the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival.’<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, when the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival is referenced in the context of the awarding of the ‘Best Young Artist’ award to a member of ReDiviDeR, the festival is referred to as just the Cork Jazz Festival, losing its Guinness sponsor and with no reference to an ‘annual drinkathon’.<sup>13</sup> Further representations of the old in the old/new binary come in the form of TV and radio presenter Gay Byrne, a symbol of tradition and conservatism in Ireland, who is called upon for his added symbolism: ‘now that Gay Byrne has presented his final Gershwin and Cole Porter-laden jazz show [...] management might consider creating a slot dedicated to the more relevant modern grooves [...]’.<sup>14</sup>

### 5.2.1 Newpark and the IMC

In the *Sunday Times* article there is a prominent photograph of Ronan Guilfoyle and halfway through the article, the reader is introduced to Newpark’s jazz department, described as ‘producing a slew of artists who are challenging such orthodox thinking’ (the orthodox thinking here being the ‘long-standing biases’ and ‘old schoolers with a preference for “in your face” bands’).<sup>17</sup> Guilfoyle states, ‘there are few contemporary musicians who don’t have a connection to Newpark’. The claim made by Guilfoyle may be true from his perspective within the scene, but it is demonstrative of how a scene is in fact not an entity but a way in which people locate themselves within a context in order to make sense of their participation. The implicit connotations in Guilfoyle’s claim are that he is referring to contemporary jazz musicians, not contemporary classical or contemporary popular musicians; however, ‘contemporary’ has almost come to be understood as a genre in itself or at least as a marker of style. There are many ‘contemporary music’ musicians who have no connection to Newpark. One participant I interviewed felt that there was a ‘heritage of free stuff that’s denied by Newpark, JJ’s and even the IMC, but by its very nature, it’s underground’.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the qualifier ‘contemporary musicians’ holds connotations of a certain type of musician that Guilfoyle is referring to, that is, not including musicians whose performance settings are typically outside the scope of ‘jazz as art’.

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Clarke, Mel.

<sup>18</sup> Anonymised interview.

In this article Clarke articulates the power that is exercised through the relationships of Newpark to musicians throughout the Dublin jazz scene. In a similar way, the IMC is also given a central role of authority in the discussion on who represents the new face of jazz in Ireland, the second half of the article containing numerous quotations from the director at the time, Gerry Godley. Furthermore, Clarke poses a rhetorical question of the group Mixtapes from the Underground—‘is their music jazz-informed?’, and explains, ‘Yes, if you subscribe to Godley’s philosophy’.<sup>19</sup> In choosing to use the word ‘philosophy’, Clarke is, either consciously or unconsciously, referencing a discourse that exists in the Dublin jazz scene concerning the authority to confer ownership and authenticity. In particular, the power of funded bodies such as the IMC and their directors to bestow ownership of what is considered ‘creative’ and ‘authentic’.

To return to Foucault’s concepts of knowledge and power, in its role of authority, as represented in this piece, the IMC is a holder of knowledge. It could be argued whether the IMC generates ‘official knowledge’ or ‘subjugated’ knowledge, as discussed in section 4.3.1. It is a private company, and although it must answer somewhat to its funders, the Arts Council, and ultimately the tax payer, it is not in the same way as a government department might have to answer to the treasury over spending or policy decisions. While the IMC is, for all intents and purposes, relatively independent, I would argue that its informal position within the structure of arts management and arts policy, makes its activities and participants bearers of official knowledge. In a Foucauldian sense, and in a very real sense as expressed by participants, they exercise power through the presentation of jazz festivals and events such as the 12 Points and the Down With Jazz festivals, in addition to programming events such as the Bray Jazz Festival and Kilkenny Arts Festival. Further demonstration of their power is expressed in the ability to attract and spend grant aid and the holding of ‘town square’ type public meetings with jazz musicians and representatives.

Another point of view may be taken that, in promoting music that is outside the commonly accepted canon of the jazz narrative, the IMC are bearers of ‘subjugated’ knowledge. Presenting music that embraces other genres and free improvisation could be considered, in the context of how Foucault viewed the repeating, retelling and uncovering of subjugated knowledge, a way in which official knowledges work as instruments of normalisation, attempting to shape populations into ‘correct’ and

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<sup>19</sup> Clarke, Mel.

‘functional’ forms of thinking and acting.<sup>23</sup> Or in this case ‘normalising’ ‘marginalised’ forms of music, which in Foucault’s view is a critical activity, one that is ‘an act of resistance to the usual treatment of them by the various sciences’, though in this case we can substitute institutes or publics for sciences.

The knowledge that is created by jazz activities, and the knowledge that exists through the functioning of institutions such as Newpark, IMC and print media, contribute to a discursive structure within which power can be exercised. Discourse calls into being forms of social identity at the moment that it simply claims to represent them. The naming of the ‘New Age of Irish jazz’ is not a neutral activity, neither is it simply reporting on a ‘truth’ that exists. Additionally, the power to name what is creative and what is not lies with only a selection of people. As Monica Reuter argues in *Creativity – A Sociological Approach*, creativity is a function of fields and domains, and what is creativity is decided by gatekeepers who have the power to do so.<sup>25</sup>

### 5.2.2 Ethnographic data

The flow of power in the relationships of participants to the major institutions is evident in the ethnographic data. When musicians spoke to me about funding, festivals or the scene as a whole, the IMC and Newpark were often used as markers of identity in regards to their own relationship with both organisations. Newpark does not symbolise a single approach or ideology but is used by jazz scene participants as a way to situate themselves within a larger context. For some, Newpark is a reasonably conservative institution that ‘not so much bullied, but encouraged to go down that bop craft way’, while for others it is an institution that fails to educate properly in what they feel is ‘jazz’ and instead teaches students ‘maths music’ (a reference to odd meter music and metric modulation).<sup>26</sup> Newpark simultaneously represents a conception of newness, which can act as a sign for inauthenticity or innovation depending on who is interpreting the sign, while it also represents tradition, which can be a sign for either authenticity or staleness.

Musicians are often continuously evolving their own stylistic preferences, with the emphasis usually on the experience of the event, rather than on an insistence that the

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23 McHoul, A.W. and Grace, Wendy: *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power, and the Subject*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 17.

25 Reuter, Monika E.: *Creativity—A Sociological Approach*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2.

26 Anonymised interviews.

music conform to specific stylistic parameters. This is not always the case and there are musicians who are known for their dedication to a particular style or idiom. However, to reduce everything to old and new is a binary that overlooks the complexity of the lived experience of musicians, where concepts of freedom, openness and tradition are tackled musically in every performance. In discussion, it was more common for musicians to self-identify in opposition to institutions or sometimes sub-groups than to a concept of newness or tradition, or even a style of music. Indeed, the boundaries between old and new expressed in the *Sunday Times* article were often crossed in the interviews I conducted and my own observations of the scene.

The scene for participants exists through their day-to-day experience of music making and participation. While they recognise the existence of other parts of the scene with which they do not have much interaction, it is always an individual experience that shapes how they see themselves in relation to institutions, venues, promoters, audience and other musicians. Power is exercised through these relationships and musical decisions express these flows of power.

Musicians' stylistic decisions are not arbitrary. We are not born with an inherent love of tradition, innovation, freedom, improvisation or other stylistic markers. Instead participants decide both what to play and what to listen to through an infinitely complex series of interactions with the world that are constantly being updated and modified. Part of these interactions are the flows of power that exist within scenes and wider flows of power throughout jazz scenes internationally. It is not co-incidence that the majority of musical groups now have a band name rather than the name of the leader. Although some groups had band names, such as the Downbeaters in the 1960s and the Organics in the 1990s, the majority of non-Dixieland jazz groups pre-2000s followed the model of the classic American groups of using the name of the leader, such as Louis Stewart Quartet or the Jim Doherty Trio. Godley reports that he began to encourage groups to use band names over leader names as that was what European festival promoters were looking for, '[t]hey can get the other thing on their doorstep, in terms of durability, the German festival promoter wants a band.'<sup>27</sup> In the contemporary scene, especially amongst younger musicians, a majority of groups, both in Ireland and Europe, now use band names rather than the names of leaders. While I am not suggesting that this change in band name style is due to Godley demanding it, in a simplistic analysis, Godley

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<sup>27</sup> Godley interview.

circulated around flows of power surrounding European festival promoters, and that was carried through to the Dublin scene, not as cause and effect, but as one of many cultural changes through the flows of power and culture.

To demonstrate this, only one of the nine Irish groups chosen to ‘represent’ Ireland in the 12 Points festival has been named after the band leader. The groups from Ireland have thus far been White Rocket, Togetherness, Moria, Mark McKnight Trio, ReDiviDeR, Thought Fox, OKO, Alarmist and Umbra. The trend is similar among all the other European groups that appear in the festival. The change also reflects an ideological shift away from the ‘great man’ leading nameless band members, to a conception of equal responsibility amongst musicians involved. The older model of a touring ‘great artist’ playing with pick-up bands of local musicians, once a method for local musicians to measure themselves against artists of international repute, is now considerably less common. Similarly, this model lacks the preparation and communication possible in a group that is working together on a regular basis.

Flows of power affect all aspects of a scene and stylistic development. While the scene is not a structured set of rules that sees participants as without agency, moving under the control of greater forces, it is important to recognise that the musicians do not exist in a vacuum where artistic integrity is the only factor to influence musical decisions. It can instead be compared to an ecosystem where all elements must adapt to survive and flourish within the surrounding environment.

### **5.2.3 Problematizing the Binary**

While interviews with Dublin jazz musicians confirm the dominance of discourse surrounding creativity, innovation and tradition, they problematize the existence of old vs new and traditional vs contemporary dichotomies as they are implied in the *Sunday Times* article. However, the article is representative of how jazz and jazz scenes are often understood more generally. A musician who placed himself outside of ‘proper jazz’ expressed his position within the scene in a number of different ways:

I’m kinda known as a kinda totally, total “wing it” kind of guy, you know. They kinda hire me for gigs when they kinda go, “Ah fuck, we’ve literally nobody who knows any of this stuff”.<sup>28</sup>

He positions one aspect of his music within the framework of famous musicians:

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<sup>28</sup> Anonymised interview.

It's not really song-book standards but we definitely do jazz standards, you know, like the kinda Bemsha swing, but there's a definite different aesthetic, you know. There was a time we were just doing songs off, like, *Bitches Brew* and *Directions*. Then there was also a while where there was all this kind of Dave Holland stuff.<sup>29</sup>

But while this musician self-identifies as being at the freer end of the jazz spectrum, he also lamented the lack of musicians participating in what would be considered a more traditional method of jazz performance:

The bands are kinda turning into the Michael Nyman band or something, it's almost a classical musical aesthetic, whereas you don't see a lot of them just getting down and rolling. You don't understand why you don't just go, "Here, photocopy out a few fucking real book charts, let's just go and play them". It's like this has to be in some way massively world-changing. And it doesn't—it just has to be a fuckin' night of music.<sup>30</sup>

It is useful to return to Foucault's concept of discourses. In particular, his understanding of the formation of identity as not being fully within the control of human agency but as being constrained and enabled by the surrounding discourses, in this case, of jazz performance. The flow of power through institutions directly impacts the jazz scene as a whole in Dublin. Success in performance for jazz scene participants is not measured by practice-room-based achievements but by acceptance by peers and public in performance environments. As the number of venues providing performance opportunities is limited, the performance opportunities offered by the institutions consequently offer a yardstick as to what success looks like within a Dublin context. Not only do the performance opportunities provided by them serve as comparatively rare 'listening environment' concert situations, but the audience outreach provided by established institutions is considerably greater than that which can usually be achieved by individual musicians/promoters. Live performance has always been part of the IMC remit in both festival and concert series settings, including Bray Jazz Festival, Kilkenny Arts Festival, Down With Jazz, 12 Points, Jazz at Hard Working Class Heroes, and Strut. As Godley stated: 'If you're a musician here and you're in your thirties, a lot of your formative experiences would have been IMC gigs'.<sup>31</sup>

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29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*

31 Godley interview.



To succeed within the Dublin jazz scene then can be conflated with exposure within a performance setting, and many of the high profile performance settings of the last thirty years have been IMC events. Musicians whose work has not been of interest to the IMC or other funding/promotional bodies must seek alternative performance opportunities and attempt to present them to as large a public comparable to the institutions. While the advent of social media and the internet has made this more possible and many musicians maintain their own mailing (email) lists, sending out newsletters with information on upcoming performances, there is still a prestige connected to the larger-scale festival opportunities and events organised by the promotional institutions.

### **5.3 IMC Artists and Nigel Mooney**

#### **5.3.1 Background**

Jazz performance exists within the systems and structures of the society in which it occurs. In particular, it is embedded in a scene that influences every aspect of the production of the culture surrounding jazz. The previous chapter demonstrated how musicians have attempted to utilise collective activity to improve aspects of jazz at many different levels. Changes in the way the music is produced and presented to the public are part of an attempt to gain more control of the production of jazz and increase interaction with the public beyond the span of the average jazz gig. By getting involved in the production of jazz, musicians attempt to ensure that ‘their’ music is not in the control of ‘others’, whether that is the whim of venues or audiences or promoters. In addition, they strive to have a direct impact on when, where, and how their music is presented to the public.

In Dublin it has often been the case that this has been done hand-in-hand with organisations that concern themselves with jazz and improvised music performance, in particular the Improvised Music Company. The other organisation that has had an overarching influence on the Dublin jazz scene is Newpark Music Centre, in particular through its degree programme, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2016. Rather than being a jazz utopia, however, with all interested parties working together toward artistic fulfilment, scenes are usually characterised by contestation and negotiation, as different paradigms of jazz performance attempt to exist within the spatial confines of a city. Often, different spaces are found for the differing approaches, and sub-scenes may hardly be aware of each other’s existence. Frequently, space and resources are highly contested, and the social nature of the jazz scene is marked by dispute and tension.

Gerry Godley is aware of the tension within the scene and the criticism that both the IMC and he personally have come under from within the jazz community connected to this tension. In discussion he noted that the nature of many of his relationships changed as he ‘morphed’ from musician to promoter:

[T]he dynamics of those relationships changes because you’re now the guy who provides employment, actually, and you have to make decisions about who gets that employment. And that, of course, changes that dynamic of those relationships. [...] It wasn’t the case with everybody. [...] Some people were cool about that and I was cool about it with them and, in other cases, I just had to take a more business-like approach to it and accept a degree of isolation from that community of practice.<sup>32</sup>

While Godley sometimes took a more business-oriented approach to relationships, the nature of the jazz scene means that it is still inherently a social relationship. When he became CEO of the IMC, the scene was already factional. The scene was often viewed through the binary of old versus new, with the founder of the IMC, Ronan Guilfoyle, representing the new in many people’s perspectives. While Godley recalls that he ‘had no dog in the fight’, as a former student of Guilfoyle’s and volunteer for the IMC, and with the prominence of Ronan Guilfoyle’s projects on the IMC schedule, from a public perception point of view, the IMC and Godley were strongly associated with Newpark and Guilfoyle.<sup>33</sup> Godley states that despite a ‘fairly uncharitable view that IMC was a vehicle’ for Guilfoyle performances, Godley quickly developed his own approach as artistic director, developing an interest in showing ‘best practice, cutting edge’, and accepting that ‘sometimes the audiences will be very small’.<sup>34</sup> He continued: ‘There are always multiple competing interests and you have to prioritise them as best you can.’<sup>35</sup>

The following discussion places the focus on one such situation, where contestation and negotiation resulted in a public statement of discontent. I investigate the events surrounding this statement because they provide an example of the tensions that exist throughout the scene as a whole; it acts as a microcosm of the broader scene and the issues that exist within it. My position as an ‘insider’ within the scene here both gives me access to information not in the public domain, and which would not usually be volunteered in media interviews. I have attempted to avoid placing blame and taking

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<sup>32</sup> Godley interview.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

sides, but instead try to demonstrate how contestation and negotiation are defining aspects of a jazz scene and jazz production.

A few days before the 2013 Down With Jazz Festival, organised by the Improvised Music Company, jazz/blues guitarist and singer Nigel Mooney performed a song on RTÉ radio's *Arena* programme during an interview organised ostensibly to promote the festival, at which he was appearing. The piece was composed by Nigel, based upon the chords and melody of 'Some Other Time', composed by Leonard Bernstein for the 1944 Broadway musical, *On the Town*.<sup>36</sup> The words to Mooney's version are:

Some play a waiting game  
Jesus or jazz, it's all the same  
No room for JC in this hostelry

This gig is just a token  
Bebop or swing, you must be joking  
So pack your bags groove and get out, oh I see

Those days all seem so hazy  
Louis, Bird and Basie  
But just to confuse, now the Devil's muse now sounds like hell

There's nothing left that's cool  
In this Godforsaken, Emerald Jewel  
So Down with Jazz and Down with IMC

(Piano solo)

Where's all the artist money?  
Spent on milk and honey  
Wine and chorizo that may be, so where's the jazz?

While we endure this famine  
The emperor's clothes are stitched with mammon  
So down with jazz and down with IMC  
So down with jazz and down with IMC<sup>37</sup>

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36 Bernstein, Leonard: *Some Other Time*, 1944.

37 'Down with Jazz —Nigel Mooney', *Arena with Seán Rocks*, RTÉ Radio 1, (4 September 2013).



Figure 8: (L-R) Johnny Taylor, Nigel Mooney, Dan Bodwell, Shane O'Donovan, *Down With Jazz*, 2013.

(Photo: John Cronin)

The episode passed relatively unnoticed and without major ramifications. The lyrics could easily be taken as tongue-in-cheek and in keeping with the subversive theme of *Down With Jazz*. However, Johnny Taylor, the pianist accompanying Mooney, felt uncomfortable about the radio performance: 'I thought Nigel's song was a bit offensive and I didn't share all his opinions about IMC.'<sup>38</sup> He agreed with Mooney that he would appear under the pseudonym Richard Wallace (a combination of his middle name and mother's maiden name) and was introduced to everyone as such until a few minutes before they went on air, at which point a woman approached and addressed Johnny directly, thus outing his subterfuge.

Why would Mooney write a protest song about the IMC, at whose festival he is going to appear, and why perform that protest song on national radio at an interview organised by the IMC? The IMC have been the subject of public protest in the past. Colm O'Sullivan, flautist and jazz critic for the now defunct *Sunday Tribune*, infamously

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<sup>38</sup> Taylor, Johnny: Telephone interview by author, 15 February 2016.

wrote a series of articles criticising the organisation that led to the IMC's solicitors writing to the newspaper in the early 2000s. Gerry Godley said of this period:

Anybody that was involved in the scene would know the eccentricities of the people involved, but if you were a member of the public, picking up a national Sunday newspaper and consistently reading a journalist that was saying that this organisation was less than responsible or ethical in the way it was using public funds for the arts, it was a very bad thing. [...] we were accused of being sectarian, and, of course, sectarian has a very specific Irish context, doesn't it?<sup>39</sup>

The IMC's solicitor wrote to the *Sunday Tribune* and demanded an apology and retraction that was duly provided by the paper and O'Sullivan left the newspaper shortly thereafter.<sup>40</sup> Regarding Mooney's protest song, Godley told me:

I actually thought what Nigel did was fantastic, you know. I have great time for Nigel, even though he doesn't kinda fit in the jazz box particularly, he's actually a musician who has a real personality. He's kinda one of the people here that has a strong, identifiable personality. [...] you know, people were pretty pissed about it actually, people in the office were a bit pissed about it. [...] I was grateful it was out in the open. People don't 'fess up', they don't challenge, talk things through.<sup>41</sup>

He continued, though, by saying that he thought Nigel's protest was 'picking up the baton from the Louis [Stewart] / Colm [O'Sullivan] thing that had gone on for years. So even though it was a bit of a laugh and I took it in the spirit it was given, actually, there was a subtext to it that was pretty heavy duty.'<sup>42</sup>

Mooney strongly disagrees that his protest had anything to do with previous disagreements. He told me: 'I always was friendly with Gerry and he always seemed fine to me, I didn't have any part in any of that Colm O'Sullivan vibe, or Louis vibe either.'<sup>43</sup> From Mooney's perspective, the events that led to his protest song evolved much later than Colm O'Sullivan's attacks through print media and, instead, relate to the establishment of the IMC Artists agency, an off-shoot set up by the IMC in 2006.

As background, Mooney recorded his first album, *All My Love's in Vain*, in 2001 and self-released it in 2003. Rubyworks, a relatively large independent record label,

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<sup>39</sup> Godley interview.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Mooney, Nigel: Interview by author, 19 November 2015.

approached Mooney soon after and expressed an interest in re-releasing the album, ‘which for a jazz/blues album in Ireland, is not what I ever expected. They repackaged it, put their own cover on it, and took ownership of it for ten years.’<sup>44</sup> Rubyworks released the album in early 2005, and worked with Mooney together with a PR company and an agent.

Over the following year we did a lot of gigs all over the country, it went very well. Gradually it began to wane after a year. My agent was now finding it difficult to sell a jazz act that wasn’t getting any PR hype. They said to me, what you need is an agent that is going to be able to sell jazz. My agent was not exactly in the right field—someone that is going to be able to sell jazz abroad.<sup>45</sup>

It was around this time that Mooney became involved in IMC Artists. The timing for Mooney was ideal as he had a product, a working band, and a record label working with him. The introduction of agency that specialised in jazz appeared to be a perfect fit.

### 5.3.2 IMC Artists

In 2006, Mooney was booked by the IMC to play the Kilkenny Arts Festival; I was playing double bass in Mooney’s band at the time. During an interview Mooney told me: ‘[A]fterwards I went to the festival club and Gerry [Godley] explained to me over a late-night drink that he had managed to garner a large amount of money to set up an agency.’<sup>46</sup> IMC Artists included Ronan Guilfoyle’s Microclimate, Nigel Mooney’s band, Conor Guilfoyle’s Havana Son, Dylan Rynhart’s Fuzzy Logic, Cormac Kenevey and the Phil Ware Trio, Sean Carpio’s White Rocket, Richie Buckley and Organics, Nick Roth’s Yurodny, and the duos of Mike Nielsen-Tommy Halferty and Dermot Dunne-Ariel Hernandez. It launched on 2 and 3 November 2006 at the Project Arts Centre, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.<sup>47</sup>

Kenneth Killeen was employed as artist services manager by the IMC in 2006 with the role of developing work for Irish artists and setting up the IMC Artists agency.<sup>48</sup> Both Godley and Killeen acknowledge the failure of IMC Artists to deliver significantly for

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44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Ibid.*

47 Improvised Music Company: ‘IMC Artists Showcase—Improvised Music Company’, (2011) <[http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/concerts/details/imc\\_artists\\_showcase](http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/concerts/details/imc_artists_showcase)> [Accessed 1 February 2016].

48 Improvised Music Company: ‘Kenneth Killeen appointed Managing Artistic Director of Improvised Music Company’, *The Journal of Music*, (2015) <<http://journalofmusic.com/listing/06-05-15/kenneth-killeen-appointed-managing-artistic-director-improvised-music-company>> [Accessed 16 December 2015].



some of the artists on their books. Killeen explained to me that a lot of meetings had taken place with venues managers around the country prior to the setting up of the agency; however, after the launch of the agency, many of the prospective bookings, especially for jazz, failed to materialise.<sup>49</sup> This meant that IMC Artists was able to obtain bookings for world music groups such as Havana Son and Yurodny, but had difficulty booking their other groups into venues.

I think we over-promised and under-delivered. We weren't to know that people would renege on agreements. [...] Another problem with IMC Artists is that we overstretched ourselves. It began as eight then ten then twelve, to try to secure concerts even with full-time workers, given that regionally the arts centres have a ceiling of about €1000, and from their perspective they have two options: "Do we put on a gamble on a jazz night or do we spend that money on an exhibition that will last for a month and tick all the Arts Council boxes?" IMC Artists was a success for some and a failure for others.<sup>50</sup>

The social aspect of scenes is highlighted in the relationship between Mooney and the IMC over this period of time. As with all of my interviewees, Mooney was concerned that he should not appear to be complaining just because he was not being supported by various institutions, in this case the IMC. As such, he felt that, in citing his 'protest' song, it was vital to give background:

I always got on very well with Gerry and I never had any views on the IMC whatsoever, other than that the IMC was a successful hard-sell organisation that was pushing their own agenda, for definite, but it didn't affect me in the slightest. They were very successfully promoting Ronan, specifically, and all that was around Ronan, and they were putting on the odd festival. [...] That's what they were for: it was promoting the more postmodernist end of jazz, so I didn't think ever that I would need to approach them or have anything to do with their promoting side. If they asked me to do a gig I was happy to do it. [...] But, as I say, it didn't worry me, I didn't need to be a part of it or want to be a part of it, or feel that it had anything to do with me whatsoever, and if they got me a gig occasionally, that was great, but I was never expecting them to, see? So I was doing quite fine in a different genre, if you like.<sup>51</sup>

The IMC Artists agency came at a time when Mooney's record label was looking for an agent who knew how to book jazz artists. Mooney told me that over a series of meetings

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49 Killeen, Kenneth: Interview by author, 13 January 2016.

50 *Ibid.*

51 Mooney interview.



between himself, the IMC, and Rubyworks, that the IMC committed to organising a nationwide tour, for which Rubyworks would fund the publicity.<sup>52</sup> The first gig of the tour was to be held in Whelan's in February or March of 2007, while Nigel's launch gig of his septet had already been organised for 2 November 2006—coincidentally, the same date as the first of the two IMC Artists agency launch dates.<sup>53</sup>

Mooney recalls that around this time he began to become concerned at comments that Godley had made stating that a Hammond organist and female singer would be added to his group. Even though he expressed his concern at the time, 'This was all left, it was all a good vibe—we were going to be on the jazz train.'<sup>54</sup> Mooney was very optimistic about his new band, framing it in such a way that emphasised his aesthetic priorities, 'the punters liked it, it wasn't too high-brow'.<sup>55</sup> Further meetings with Godley and Killeen took place regarding the 2007 tour, built around the Whelan's gig and the Bray Jazz Festival, 'which they also controlled, so they could naturally put their own artists into that as part of a general tour'.<sup>56</sup> At the same meeting, Mooney remembers saying to them, 'By the way, this thing about the organist and the girl singer, it won't work; I have my band and I have the arrangements and it's working really nicely now'.<sup>57</sup> Mooney recalled explaining both the musical and financial reasons why his own septet was a better option than a nonet, 'so it was left, without me particularly putting my foot down, or kicking up any fuss about it, but I had made my point artistically about how I was not interested in going on with this particular side of the arrangement'.<sup>58</sup>

Although still optimistic about the tour, Mooney recalls that as 2007 went on Rubyworks would ring him asking about the tour and he would consequently ring Killeen.

I would ring up Ken [...] they were doing absolutely nothing, and there was still this thing of the organist and the girl singer. [...] A couple of weeks later Ken rang me or I rang him and he said, "We've pulled the Whelan's gig." [...] I said, "Ken, would you tell me have you pulled the gig because I have decided and let you know that I would rather not have a Hammond organ and a girl singer in my seven-piece fucking band?" and he said, "I'm not in a position to answer that, Nigel", or

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

something to that effect. In other words, he wasn't making any decisions and it was all getting kind of childish.<sup>59</sup>

A couple of months before the Bray Jazz Festival, Mooney was informed that the IMC may not be putting him on that either, and he subsequently called a meeting with Godley. According to Mooney, Godley explained how the IMC had put €60,000 into the agency so far, that they would not be putting any European tour together for Mooney, and that the type of music Mooney played did not suit the IMC's direction, and also did not tick the boxes required to get Arts Council support. Mooney described the meeting as confrontational and that, by the end of it, he knew things were not progressing. Mooney's band eventually did end up playing at the Bray Jazz Festival, but his relationship with the IMC broke down shortly afterwards. Rubyworks once again rang Mooney looking for an update on the Irish tour, and he subsequently contacted the IMC again, speaking to Killeen on the phone, before Godley allegedly:

[...] took the phone from him, in the office, and started shouting over the phone, and said, "Who do you think you are, that you think we've got nothing better to do than get gigs for you?" I said, "Well, I think I'm an artist in your agency". And we had a row on the phone with him doing a lot of shouting and in the end, then, he calmed down a bit and he said, "We'll try to look for gigs". Shortly after, Rubyworks dropped the whole thing. That was moving now into early summer. This was pretty much the last I heard from Rubyworks, except when I went to buy back some of my CDs from them [laughs].<sup>60</sup>

After this phone call, Mooney got one more gig through the IMC, at the Westport Arts Festival (a gig at which I played bass) and did not see Godley again until the funeral of pianist Noel Kelehan. Mooney feels that the actions of the IMC at this time embarrassed him in regards to his relationship with his other backers, Rubyworks. Additionally, he stated 'the strangest thing of all, the IMC agency just seemed to kind of fizzle away with all its funding and nobody questioned it. A lot of non-musicians had a bit of fun with that money, but certainly I don't know of anybody that got many gigs. [...] Ken was a nice guy; I think he was just not in charge and just out of his depth.'<sup>61</sup>

While Killeen acknowledges the lack of success of IMC Artists, he insists:

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

It wasn't for lack of trying. I can tell you that with absolute certainty. I was on the phone pretty much five days a week, trying to pitch and package things in different ways and trying to negotiate prices, but the problem was that Nigel had done so many arts centres in Ireland and he hadn't really done great in a lot of them, for them in terms of box office—certainly great artistically. I think Nigel's a great guitar player, a wonderful singer, and a very good arranger, but basically they were saying, "We've done that, and we're not sort of going there again", and that was really banging your head off a brick wall.<sup>62</sup>

For Mooney, the consequences of falling out with the IMC went beyond not being booked for gigs. When he was preparing for the release of his next album in 2013, his wife Essie acted as an agent. Mooney recalls her telling him she was approaching Kilkenny Arts Festival, Bray Jazz Festival, and Down With Jazz:

I said, "No point in emailing them, because they won't give me a gig, because that's the IMC and I'm an IMC artist". And I thought then, the IMC now really do have it sewn up. The only places that are free of them are Sligo, Limerick, and Cork. So I didn't have any bitterness towards them, I just found it ironic and mildly sort of humorous that if you wanted to promote yourself at certain jazz festivals, you would have to lick Gerry's boots basically, that's how I saw it.<sup>63</sup>

It was within this context that Mooney was approached by Brian Smyth from JJ Smyth's to perform at the 2013 Down With Jazz festival as part of a nightly slot that had been given over to programming by Smyth to present 'JJ's acts'. Mooney was subsequently approached to take part in the radio interview by Aoife Concannon, PR and marketing manager from the IMC, who was not aware of the acrimonious relationship between Mooney and Godley. Mooney felt in a dilemma about speaking about the IMC on the radio, and a few days before the interview decided to write the new lyrics instead of speaking about the IMC.

### **5.3.3 The IMC as a Resource Organisation**

Mooney's criticism of the IMC concerned a specific turn of events, and, up until his involvement with the IMC Artists agency, his involvement with and expectation of the IMC was minimal. Other musicians, however, look towards the IMC as a publicly-funded body that has a remit to serve them and the jazz community. Earlier, I quoted Killeen explaining some of the difficulties in the successful implementation of IMC Artists. Similarly, Godley stated that in terms of his time in charge of the IMC and the

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<sup>62</sup> Killeen interview.

<sup>63</sup> Mooney interview. Mooney is being ironic when he says '[...] that's the IMC and I'm an IMC artist'.

achievements of the company, he was disappointed at some of the things that he wanted to achieve that did not happen: ‘I think the fact that we never really succeeded in catapulting a couple of Irish bands onto the international scene, that’s a disappointment, particularly as I had been so actively involved in creating a route to market, for want of a better term, through 12 Points, that’s a big disappointment.’<sup>64</sup> He continued:

I would be honest with myself and say that whole developmental thing, we got a little done but not as much as you’d liked, but we were really up against it. You could look at it and say, “They’re getting €300,000 a year from the Arts Council, we’ll just let the IMC get on with the developmental agenda”. But, actually, if everybody wasn’t on the same page about it, or a version thereof, then there was nothing we could do if musicians weren’t prepared to buy into it.<sup>65</sup>

Godley stated that by utilising the international contacts he had cultivated through running 12 Points, the IMC was on the cusp of organising international tours for people. He told me that he could have said to people ‘but you know what, they mightn’t be very lucrative, and it’s going to be a big time commitment and it’s going to be a pain, do you want to do it or not?’<sup>66</sup> He continued:

[I]n a lot of instances people would say, “Nah, don’t wanna do it, because I’d have to dep my teaching, and I’ve got that regular gig, and it’s just too much hassle.” I’m a practical guy, I understand why people would have those kinda reasons, but unless the appetite was there, then no amount of throwing money at it was trying to change that.<sup>67</sup>

Some of the same points were made by Godley at an IMC organised public meeting in 2014, where he likened international success to climbing Mount Everest; while only a few would reach the peak, many would be needed to support at Base Camp and along the way. It was presented with a view to creating collective, community driven activity in order to promote the Irish jazz scene. Godley explained: ‘This notion of collective action, so that we’re all tied to each other getting up the mountain, it’s really about community and if we can start to articulate a better sense of community amongst ourselves, then we will start to project that outwards. And I think where that starts actually is bearing witness to what everybody’s doing as a musician.’<sup>68</sup> It was an analogy that did not manage to convince all present to get behind such a concept, with

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<sup>64</sup> Godley interview.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Godley: Improvised Music Company Public Meeting, 9 June 2014.

one musician reacting to suggestions of further meetings by saying, ‘You know exactly what you like and what you don’t like, so you kinda know now, instead of having more meetings [...] we don’t need meetings, we could solve it now, you know exactly how you feel about jazz, you know what the groups are, it could be solved now. No more conversation, we’ve done it.’<sup>69</sup>

During his interview with me, Godley reflected on his attempts at connecting with the jazz musicians of Ireland:

Honestly, I banged my head about this for years. I ran forums and they were sometimes a train wreck; some of those discursive events where we tried to explain to people what we were up to—it was acutely uncomfortable, because the animosity towards us was fully apparent. [...] It was like, “What’s in it for me? I don’t give a shit about what you guys are talking about unless there’s something in it for me.” It’s the point I made to you earlier, the heavy lifting of progress in an artistic community only happens if people put their shoulder to the wheel.<sup>70</sup>

Godley’s language here could be seen to demonstrate his approach to increasing the viability of the Dublin jazz scene: the ‘heavy lifting of progress’ only occurs when people ‘put their shoulder to the wheel’. For Godley, the creative scene is not so much an organic process that evolves in its own time. Rather than a ‘sit back and see’ approach, Godley is an advocate of affirmative action, or what he has often referred to as ‘social engineering’. By getting the ‘right’ people in the room at the same time, Godley hopes to see ‘progress’ as they ‘put their shoulder to the wheel’, thus moving forward.

Critics of Godley and the IMC would argue that the reason for the animosity was because of a perceived IMC agenda toward what it might call ‘creative, progressive jazz’, and what some participants to me would describe as ‘left of centre’, ‘weirder stuff’, ‘non-mainstream’, or ‘postmodern’. It is yet another example of how binaries are used in jazz discourse, dividing the music into two camps, ‘classic’ and ‘contemporary’. These categorisations however do not hold up to scrutiny. Again, claims on the ownership of what jazz represents are the source of tensions within the jazz community, tied directly to the economic consequences of choosing jazz as a means of income. In

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69 Contributor to public meeting, 9 June 2014.

70 Godley interview.

addition, Godley argues that there was a binary of foreign versus local musicians—a binary that was sometimes used as a criticism towards him:

[People say] “Oh, you’re doing great things for foreign musicians but what are you doing for us?” [...] This happens in every festival and every art form, that someone will say, you know, “Who are you to be the arbiter?” But, actually, when you’re in charge of something, as I was, that’s the responsibility. People might think, “That must be great”. It’s not great. It’s shite.<sup>71</sup>

Some within the jazz scene believe that because the IMC is in receipt of Arts Council (and therefore, in a sense, public) funding, it should be serving the jazz community as a whole. In reality, the IMC is a company that has been more focused on music production than on its role as a resource organisation. I do not think this is a controversial statement. Without the activism undertaken by the IMC, jazz would be subaltern in the national psyche, more so than it already is. The success stories of the 12 Points and Down With Jazz festivals are the result of work that has been going on for far beyond the actual life of the festivals. That said, my belief is that the need to communicate with other institutions, venues, and funding bodies has sometimes separated them in an unfavourable manner from the people who make up the majority of the community of which they are a part.

For most of the duration of this study, there was a disconnect between the IMC’s claim to be a resource organisation, and their perceived engagement with the wider jazz community. The second sentence on the old IMC website stated: ‘We are Ireland’s largest specialist music producer and resource with hands-on involvement in many aspects of music making throughout the island.’<sup>72</sup> Godley makes the point that ‘as artistic director, you have to constantly think about quality, you have to square off quality with being inclusive or the optics of making sure everybody gets an opportunity, and I was pretty strict on that; I was prepared to take whatever kind of criticism went with that and kind of be robust in defending my view about quality.’<sup>73</sup>

While public meetings are certainly a method of engaging with the community, other opportunities have been missed in the past. The IMC website, from at least 2011 until it was updated on 15 June 2016, had four links prominently displayed: Concerts, 12

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Godley interview.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

Points, Newsletter, and Resources for Musicians. The 'Resources for Musicians' link had, since 2011, linked to a page that stated: 'Artists resources: coming soon!'<sup>74</sup> As much as I believe, and have always found, the IMC's staff and board to be both well-intentioned and to have achieved many successes over the years, contributing much to the jazz scene, it can be small things such as neglecting to complete the 'Resources for Musicians' page for five years, that can make a difference to the many musicians who do not have a direct connection with the IMC. Basic resources such as which venues are approachable for gigs, how and when to apply for funding and projects, and how to advertise and promote gigs are the raw material that could have served the needs of many with a minimal amount of effort.

Changes occurred in November of 2015 that increased the capability of the IMC to provide for the wider jazz community. 'Monthly Musician Meets' were introduced as a way of providing access to the organisation. Similar to previous public meetings, the new monthly meetings are without an agenda and presented as more of a social occasion where anything can be discussed. In addition, a new newsletter specifically for musicians began, including all local listings, relevant news, articles and deadlines for funding. In September 2015, the IMC had already introduced an industry newsletter targeting key domestic bookers and arts centres. The newly designed website now has six main links: Events, Festivals, Explore Artists, News, Scene and About. The Scene link now leads to a page that highlights 'the work of domestic musicians in Ireland, as well as providing support and resources for those musicians'.<sup>75</sup> Another new venture includes IMC Supports, which sees the IMC working with a 'selection of musicians and groups' by providing 'assistance, advice and in-kind support'.<sup>76</sup> Artists and groups for the first year were the Kevin Brady Trio, CEO Experiment, Havana 'Che, Day of the Duo and Sue Rynhart.<sup>77</sup>

Killeen explained that the IMC has 'undergone a transformative year in terms of changing personnel. I'm taking it as the first steps on a new organisation'.<sup>78</sup> While the IMC has held public meetings for a long time, Killeen stated, 'I have a little bit of an

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74 Improvised Music Company: 'Resources—Improvised Music Company', (2011).

<<http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/resources>> [Accessed 4 February 2016].

75 'Scene | Improvised Music Company', <<http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/scene/>> [Accessed 8 June 2016].

76 'IMC Supports | Improvised Music Company', <<http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/scene/imc-supports>> [Accessed 10 June 2016].

77 *Ibid.*

78 Killeen interview.



issue with an organisation calling a meeting with an agenda—it just perpetuates the organisation/musician divide.’<sup>79</sup> The new monthly musician meeting is intended to be ‘a hang, there’s no agenda, it’s basically for people to come along, as was the case a couple of weeks ago, there were a lot of young musicians there’.<sup>80</sup> He continued, saying that this was ‘exactly what we need, we need to identify these musicians, know what they want, know what their expectations are, guide them where we can and explain to them what we do, explain to them what we can’t do, and explain to them the level of funding we have and how we distribute it, and just try to be completely transparent’.<sup>81</sup>

The power of the institution as a conceptual body and those that run it can lend strength to the discrediting of dissenting voices. Both Godley and Killeen spoke to me of those who ask, ‘What have you done for me lately?’ When questions such as funding are on the line, it is easiest to cast people into the same group, as complainers who may not meet the standard of quality, either musically or politically. Killeen repeated the phrase, ‘We can’t help those who don’t help themselves,’ while Godley expressed his reaction to the question ‘What have you done for me lately?’ by saying ‘You have to make decisions all the time that some people won’t like, and some people won’t talk to you anymore. But, rightly or wrongly, all you can do is be as well informed as you can and make decisions as equitably as you can and around the right criteria.’<sup>82</sup> The pedagogical environments were singled out by Killeen as spaces where ‘you spend four years or more woodshedding, learning your instrument, learning from past masters, transcribing and then that’s like a 95% focus on performance and 5% might be business related.’<sup>83</sup>

He continued by saying that at the end of a period of study, at least within an Irish context, many musicians are not ready for the reality of surviving outside the confines of school or college, and ‘a lot of people find that hard to swallow, so the next thing they do is look for funding, so the Arts Council becomes a target, the IMC, the Music Network, they all become targets’.<sup>84</sup> Killeen said the IMC have tried to address this by visiting Newpark once a year and ‘explaining what it is that we do and how we do it

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Killeen interview; Godley interview.

<sup>83</sup> Killeen interview.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

[...] and more importantly what we cannot do. The minimum price of entry is you must have something we can work with, be that an idea, be that an album, be that an EP.’<sup>85</sup>

The flow of power is always present through the relationships of establishments such as the IMC with wider communities, and the situations and circumstances that evolve are more complex than they appear to be from any one angle, and therefore judgements of right and wrong are usually more about perspective than being objective positions. It is still true, however, that the power of the institution can cast the knowledge of the dissenter as ‘subjugated’ knowledge. The collective complaints of those who do not have access to gigs, funding, and influence can be dismissed as those who ‘do not help themselves’, while at the same time there is truth to that statement, and those who do ‘help themselves’ will be prominent within the Dublin jazz scene. It does appear that while Godley was always active within the jazz community and was keen to engage with key players within the scene and promote and support their work, his successor, Killeen gives the impression, to me at least, that he is consciously attempting to lessen the divide between organisation and musician. As evidence, in 2015, the first year that Killeen was in charge of Down With Jazz, Louis Stewart appeared as part of an IMC event for the first time since the late 1990s, defusing somewhat the long-standing schism between the IMC and Stewart discussed in Chapter 4.3.3.

Negotiating the relationships between the IMC, its staff and the jazz musicians of Ireland is complex, ongoing, and continuously changing. My interest is in seeing how claims to ownership of jazz play out through the jazz scene through the relationships between the institutions and participants within the scene. In doing so, this demonstrates the role that flows of power play in stylistic change within jazz scenes, and in the daily lives of jazz musicians. Although it may appear that I am highlighting positive changes that have occurred since Killeen took over the IMC, I want it to be clear that although Godley’s actions were not always popular, in my opinion, and in the opinion of many, he achieved a great deal during his tenure at IMC and I am not attempting to discredit his work. It may prove to be the case that it is more difficult to achieve change while attempting to address the needs and wants of many, rather than taking a more pragmatic approach to achieving an end goal.

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

I am acutely aware of the ability of institutions to wield power, and to relegate the knowledge of dissenters to marginal knowledge, and the ease with which complaints can be acknowledged but then summarily dismissed as the complaints of those who feel entitled. I am quite clear in my mind that the IMC is not some sort of villain in the Irish jazz narrative; on the contrary, it has always worked with the intention of building a vibrant scene within Dublin in particular, and pushing jazz outside of the capital. The idea that the IMC is a public body funded to ‘serve’ the jazz community is, in my view, an incorrect one. The IMC makes a proposal to the Arts Council every year that corresponds with the Arts Council’s own policy documents, and places an emphasis on concepts traditionally valued in the jazz world, such as ‘innovation and creativity’.

Innovation and creativity are not unique to the jazz world, of course; in fact, over the last twenty years, the idea of a ‘creative economy’ has established itself as a hegemonic term in policy documents to the point that it can be considered a doctrine.<sup>86</sup> Although ‘creativity’ is taken as a universally positive concept, it is interesting to note that the term only entered the English language as an abstract noun in 1875, and only entered into common usage a half century later.<sup>87</sup> Camilla Nelson notes that the term is not a signifier of excellence in jazz discourse alone, but is found ‘scattered across the literature of the arts and sciences, industry, business management, information technology, education and government’.<sup>88</sup> I am not arguing against ‘creativity’, of course, that is the beauty of the word, it cannot be argued against. It is worth noting that there are few jazz musicians, indeed, few musicians, who do not view their work as ‘creative’. Within jazz discourse, I would argue that a discourse of creativity is used to give authority to musical styles, in particular, to increase the authenticity of improvising musicians who reject the hegemonic American ‘mainstream’ jazz performance tradition by emphasising ‘creativity’ and ‘innovation’ over ‘tradition’.

The jazz scene often views itself as an autonomous community of insiders, creating meaning for themselves and those outside it who seek jazz experiences. In this section and in the previous two chapters, I have demonstrated how the relationship of institutions and individuals always involves a flow of power. Additionally, I have shown the contestation, negotiation, and conflict that can occur, especially where the

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86 Schlesinger, Philip: ‘Creativity: from discourse to doctrine?’, *Screen*, 48, (2007).

87 Kristeller, Paul, 1983, quoted in Nelson, Camilla: ‘The Invention of Creativity: The Emergence of a Discourse’, *Cultural Studies Review*, 16, (2010).

88 *Ibid.*, 49.

relationship involves economic implications (and it nearly always does). The jazz scene is embedded in larger political, social, and economic frameworks that, despite protests to the contrary, influence and shape jazz performance and the production of culture surrounding jazz performance. Within this context, individuals will always be contesting for limited resources, be they material wealth or public acceptance and artistic success.

## **5.4 Down With Jazz**

### **5.4.1 Introduction**

‘FIR AGUS MNÁ NA HÉIREANN’ [Men and Women of Ireland] reads the poster for the first Down With Jazz festival (see Figure 9), held for the first time in 2012, and annually thereafter, at Meeting House Square, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.<sup>89</sup> Located on the south side of the River Liffey, Temple Bar has been dubbed the ‘Cultural Quarter’ of Dublin, and is among the busiest of the city’s night spots, especially popular with tourists. The poster continues, ‘Remember your patriots! Your country needs you. The scourge of jazz with its foreign rhythms and diabolical airs has not yet been cleansed from Erin’s blessed shores.’ Printed on paper made to look aged, complete with Irish harps, the bottom of the poster reads: ‘Signed: The Rev Peter Conefrey Commemorative Committee’—the same Reverend Peter Conefrey found in the anti-jazz march in 1934 discussed in Chapter 2. The first line of the poster calls to mind the first line of the Irish Proclamation in its cry to ‘Irish men and Irish women’. It is a striking poster and was displayed on advertising spaces throughout the city that were usually reserved for larger rock and pop concerts and festivals.

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89 Improvised Music Company: Down With Jazz 2012 Poster, 2012  
<<http://downwithjazz.ie/dwjposters/>>.

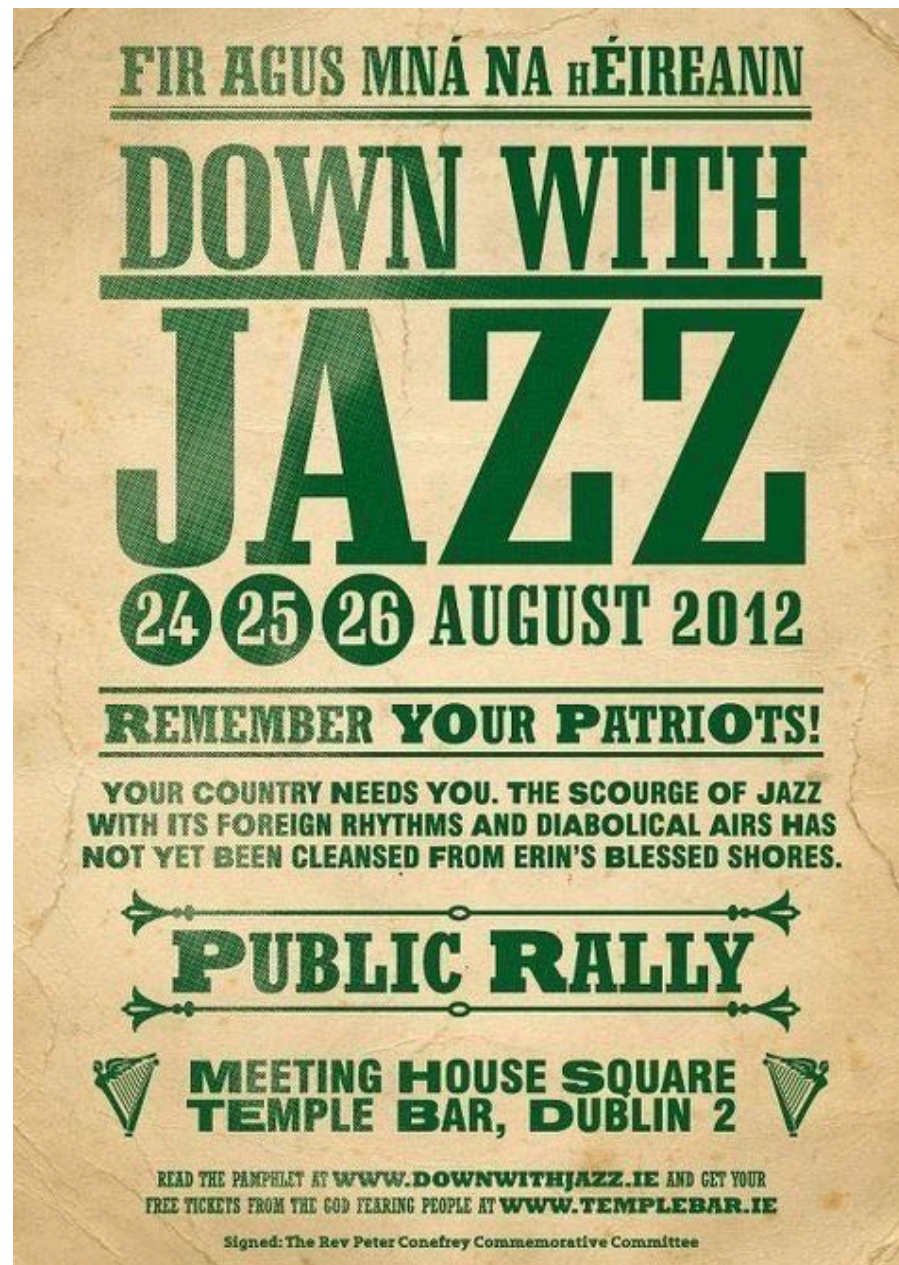


Figure 9: Down With Jazz Poster, 2012

(Copyright: Improvised Music Company, 2012)

I attended each day and/or night of the Down With Jazz festival in both 2013 and 2014, taking field notes both times, and attending also as a performer in 2014. This case study investigates the role of the Down With Jazz festival within the Dublin jazz scene and examines how the Down With Jazz festival draws from the past in attempting to (re)define jazz performance and a jazz community.

#### 5.4.2 Origins of Festival

Kenneth Killeen, general manager of the Improvised Music Company, credits Aoife Concannon, PR and marketing manager for the same, for noticing the 1989 RTÉ radio



documentary *Down With Jazz*, that lead to the conception of the festival.<sup>91</sup> The IMC had already experienced success with the 12 Points festival and ‘wanted something that was all about Irish musicians’.<sup>92</sup> Killeen described how, as a company, the IMC decided to focus on events, since isolated club shows required a significant investment of time and effort to produce one night of music. Killeen remarked that ‘even for a not-for-profit organisation you need to have something decent to equate on the revenue side’.<sup>93</sup> Accordingly, a decision was made to focus attention on ‘pillars of activity’ that would be the core focus of the company throughout the year: 12 Points representing a European focus; and Down With Jazz being a nationally-focused event.<sup>94</sup> ‘The key thing here is experiential events,’ said Killeen, connecting with Christopher Small’s concept of ‘musicking’—wherein music is a multi-faceted experience, not only about the audio information being transmitted, but including everything surrounding the experience of music participation.<sup>95</sup> Small suggests that by understanding musicking as participation in musical activity in any way, including performing, listening, rehearsing, dancing, tuning pianos, and more, then the concept of musicking can further help us to answer the question: ‘*What does it mean when this performance (of this work) takes place at this time, in this place, with these participants?*’ (Italics in original).<sup>96</sup>

### 5.4.3 Reasons for Down With Jazz Festival

A festival introduces a different way of experiencing music, especially music being presented as jazz, which is more traditionally presented in the club/pub setting. When I spoke to the then organiser Gerry Godley at the 2013 festival, he framed it as a gathering as much for the musicians as for the wider community. In an interview in 2015, Godley told me that Down With Jazz is/was trying to do two things: broaden the audience for jazz; and bring the community together.<sup>97</sup>

The Irish jazz community gets very few opportunities to frame itself in a big way. We rarely represent as a corpus on a big stage. [...] The aperture is very small because it’s JJ’s [Smyth’s] or the International [Bar]. Meeting House Square is a bigger aperture. There are other things that are about excellence. Down With Jazz was about putting the

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<sup>91</sup> Killeen, Telephone interview.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*; Small, 9.

<sup>96</sup> Small, 10.

<sup>97</sup> Godley interview.

music in an Irish context. It was more about social engineering than about anything else.<sup>98</sup>

Returning to Small, he argues that ‘musicking always takes place for a purpose’.<sup>99</sup> Every time the ritual of musicking takes place, ‘We may be sure that *somebody’s* values are being explored, affirmed, and celebrated in every musical performance, at anytime, anywhere.’ (Italics in original).<sup>100</sup> In the fragmented and sometimes fractious Dublin jazz scene, then, this framing of the community takes on a deeper significance. Godley’s comments reflect my findings that the scene exists within small pockets of activity that intersect enough to create a concept of a wider scene, but not enough to maintain a strong sense of a single community within that scene.

The identity of the Irish jazz community, like all identities, is understood in opposition to other identities. The jazz community exists because it is not rock, classical, folk, or any other identity. Although labelling becomes less and less relevant as genres become harder to pin down, and scholars and artists argue that we should adopt a post-genre attitude, for scholarly, or even casual, conversation to continue, generalisations must be made.

It is interesting that not all genres suffer from the desire to be post-genre as much as jazz. While it is understood that ‘classical’ or ‘rock’ are broad generalisations that do little to define the music that may exist within those terms, the question ‘Is it classical?’ or ‘Is it rock?’ is not ever-present. Identity for participants in jazz scenes is all the more important because it distinguishes them from the rock festival, or the concert hall, although they may be found at both. So, as popular as the idea of contemporary jazz as ‘post-genre’ is, for many I spoke to at the festival, genre was at the forefront of their minds; it was, after all, the Down With *Jazz* festival. How, then, does the musicking that takes place at Down With Jazz reflect the values of the participants, and which participants’ values are being ‘explored, affirmed and celebrated’?

#### **5.4.4 Links to the Past**

Using literature from the period of the 1930s’ anti-jazz movement, the IMC co-opt the original movement and in doing so draw a connection between jazz in the 1930s and the jazz of today, creating a sense of continuity or a tradition of jazz in Ireland. The

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Small, 77.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*



promotion of the festival embraces ideas of jazz as a rebellious music, pushing boundaries of acceptability and challenging conformity. In addition, the evidence of the Catholic Church being against the importation of ‘foreign music’, and therefore jazz being ‘anti-Church’, draws a parallel to contemporary society, where the influence of the Church has been significantly reduced. Like Nigel Mooney’s Down With Jazz protest song, discussed previously, while the idea is tongue-in-cheek, the political implications are significant. The organisers of Down With Jazz are squarely placing jazz performance as a part of a progressive, secular society, rejecting, for example, outmoded concepts of nationalism while still celebrating a more diverse sense of ‘Irishness’, as is reflected in the Down With Jazz programme. Rather than reject nationalism entirely, however, Down With Jazz embraces elements of historical Ireland and re-presents them in the context of a jazz festival.

At the 2014 festival, Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA) flags and bunting surrounded the stage, and during the weekend Godley tweeted a photo and asked who could name the flags. In fact, the connection to the GAA had been used by the IMC when it organised a photo shoot in 2013 of members of the jazz community wearing Down With Jazz branded sports jerseys and wielding hurleys. The connection is another marketing tool that cleverly links to the past and speaks to Irish society and ‘Irishness’. In the book, *Sport, Policy, and Politics: A Comparative Analysis*, Barrie Houlihan has written about the ‘extent to which the GAA is woven into the fabric of Irish society, religion and politics’.<sup>101</sup> The co-opting of the organisation for the festival worked because of its connection to ‘Irishness’, and furthermore, its connections with the Church. GAA teams are organised around parishes, and many use the names of saints for the teams. For many years, on the day of the All-Ireland final, a bishop would throw in the ball and the hymn *Faith of our Fathers* would be sung.<sup>102</sup> While the connection between the GAA and the Catholic Church has been largely harmonious (with the notable exception of the 1880s, when the Church attempted to stamp out the Association when it believed it was infiltrated by the Irish Republican Brotherhood), it now reflects ‘the Catholic aspect of wider Irish society’, meaning that the connection to

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101 Houlihan, Barrie: *Sport, Policy, and Politics: A Comparative Analysis*, (Abingdon: Psychology Press, 1997), 161.

102 Rouse, Paul, interviewed in Michael Moynihan: ‘GAA and Catholic Church no longer hand in glove’, *Irish Examiner*, (2012) <<http://www.irishexaminer.com/sport/columnists/michael-moynihan/gaa-and-catholic-church-no-longer-hand-in-glove-198607.html>> [Accessed 6 March 2016].

Catholicism is important for some within the GAA and unimportant for others.<sup>103</sup> The idea of associating the GAA with a jazz festival again creates an incongruous relationship between tradition, ‘Irishness’, and jazz that is at once tongue-in-cheek and yet speaks directly to issues of tradition and authenticity within jazz and jazz studies.

Although ‘European jazz’ as a concept has been discussed throughout this research, the notion of an ‘Irish jazz sound’ is not strong, especially when compared to descriptors such as the ‘Nordic sound’, whatever their usefulness. By connecting Irish jazz to the past and to tradition, both through links to the anti-jazz protests and by using imagery and symbols from the GAA, it is, in effect, creating a tradition and a sense of belonging to the past and to the present, as well as appealing to an ‘Irish’ sense of mischievousness and rebelliousness. The 2013 Down With Jazz was held on the same day as the GAA All-Ireland final in Croke Park, allowing for captions such as this (see Figure 10): ‘Down With Jazz musicians Chris Engel, Cormac Kenevey, Daniel Jacobson are ready for the clash with this weekend’s GAA final!’<sup>105</sup>



Figure 10: (L-R) Chris Engel, Cormac Kenevey, Daniel Jacobson:  
Down With Jazz 2013 Promotional Photo

(Copyright: Improvised Music Company)

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> ‘Down with Jazz Festival this weekend—RTÉ Ten’, (2013)  
<<http://www.rte.ie/ten/news/2013/0906/472659-down-with-jazz-festival-this-weekend/>> [Accessed 7 March 2016].

Further exploitation of the contrast between the festival and the GAA is found in another caption from the Down With Jazz media page (see Figure 11): ‘L-R Daniel Jacobson (aka ZoiD) and Chris Engel will perform at Down With Jazz festival this weekend 6-8<sup>th</sup> Sept in Meeting House Sq., Temple Bar—clashing with the GAA hurling final in more ways than one.’<sup>106</sup> In this instance, the ‘more ways than one’ implies the musicians are ‘clashing’ with GAA values and ideals, albeit tongue-in-cheek.



Figure 11: (L-R) Daniel Jacobson, Chris Engel. Down with Jazz 2013  
Promotional Photo

(Copyright: Improvised Music Company)

At the 2014 festival Godley connected the audience directly with the targets of the 1930s protests, speaking on stage about the ‘Down with Jazz’ movement and saying

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106 Improvised Music Company: L-R Daniel Jacobson (aka ZoiD) and Chris Engel will perform at Down With Jazz festival this weekend 6-8th Sept in Meeting House Sq., Temple Bar—clashing with the GAA hurling final in more ways than one., 2013 <<http://downwithjazz.ie/dwjposters/>>.

‘We joke about it, it’s kind of funny, but it’s kind of serious’, before quoting Cardinal MacRory’s pastoral letter of 1931, which laments ‘unsuitables’ travelling throughout the country to attend parish dances. ‘So you’re the unsuitables, and these guys [the band D.F.F.] have travelled from all over the country, so they’re clearly unsuitables as well,’ says Godley.<sup>107</sup> Godley made a direct connection between the ‘jazzers’ of the 1930s and the contemporary audience while also making the point that, while it was all ‘kind of funny’, it was also ‘kind of serious’, the implication being that the IMC, and by extension Down With Jazz, is socially and politically aware and therefore aware of the larger issues that the festival references: those of tradition, diversity, religion, race, and nationalism.

#### **5.4.5 Down With Jazz Marketing**

Further links to the past are created in the way that the IMC use the historical distance to the 1930s’ anti-jazz movement as a backdrop against which to juxtapose a more contemporary notion of jazz performance. The 2013 Down With Jazz poster below utilises the image of the top of a Celtic cross or High Cross design, decorated with Celtic knots, the Irish harp, and with the words ‘Down With Jazz’ written in Gaelic typeface, as well as Irish language for the words ‘ticket’ and ‘official program’. The Celtic cross is a strong symbol of both Irish and Celtic identity (although Celtic identity itself is extremely malleable and elusive), along with the Irish harp, a symbol that has been the official emblem of Ireland since the foundation of the Irish Free State in 1922.<sup>108</sup>

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107 Godley, Gerry: Onstage announcement, Down With Jazz Festival, (2014).

108 O’Donnell, Mary Louise: ‘Death of an Icon: Deconstructing the Irish Harp Emblem in the Celtic Tiger Years’, *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland*, 8, (2013).



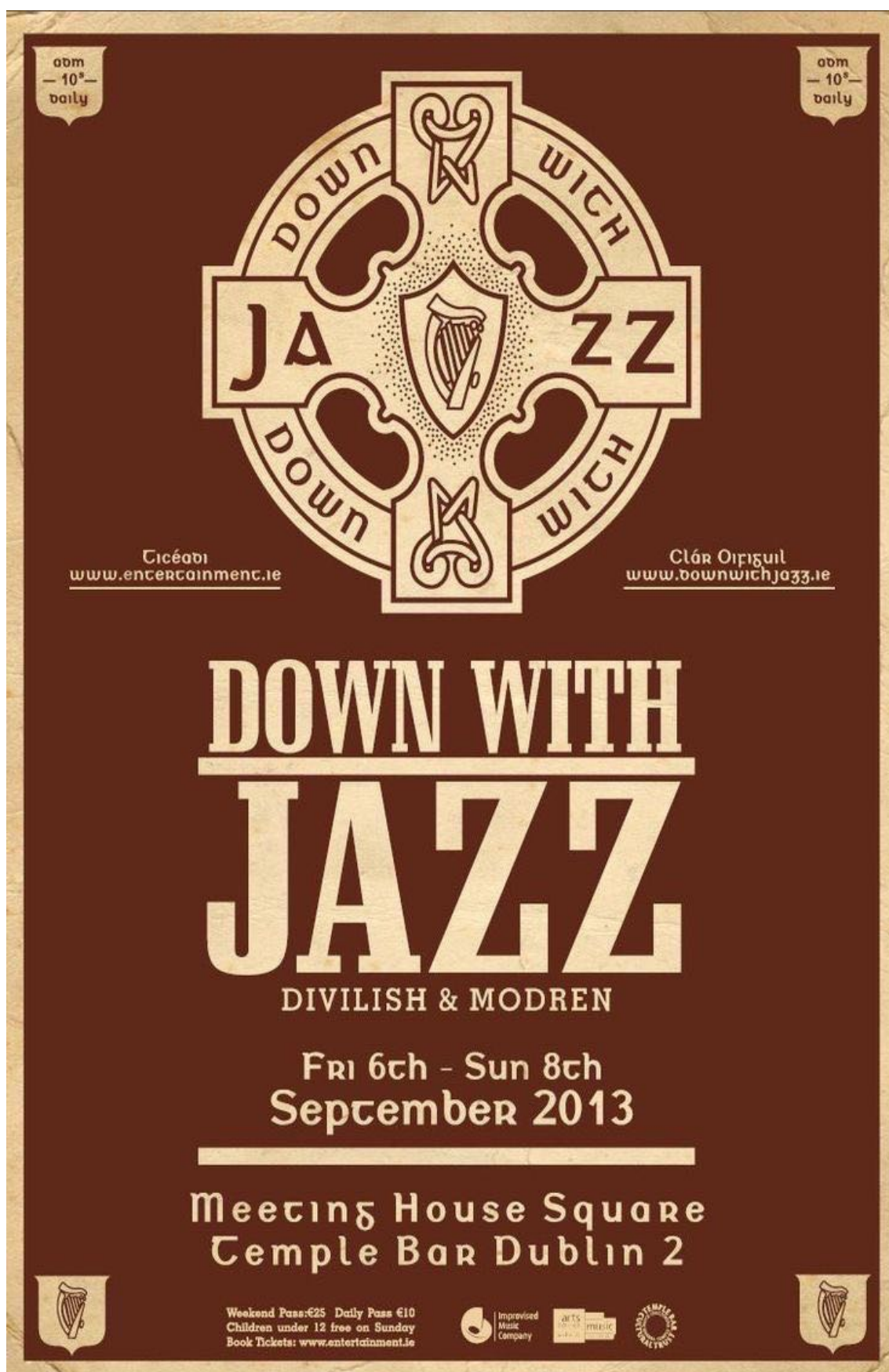


Figure 12: Down With Jazz 2013 poster

(Copyright: Improvised Music Company)

The tongue-in-cheek nature of the poster is demonstrated by the words ‘divilish & modren’, poking fun at common Irish pronunciations of ‘devilish’ and ‘modern’, while highlighting the connection to the 1930s’ anti-jazz movement.

The 2012 promotional video uses sound bites taken from the RTÉ Radio 1 programme on the anti-jazz movement of the 1930s, with dramatised crowds shouting ‘*Down with jazz*’ and ‘*Down with paganism*’.<sup>109</sup> The 2013 promotional video juxtaposes video of hurling matches, 1930s American swing dancing, marching bands in uniform, contemporary big bands, Irish jazz musicians, and applauding crowds.<sup>110</sup> Using both film of American jazz from the 1930s and 1940s and film of the artists appearing in the 2013 festival, the video again makes a connection between the music that was decried in the anti-jazz movement of the 1930s, jazz understood as an American and black American tradition, and the contemporary purveyors of jazz music today.<sup>111</sup> The background music to the promotional video is another example of a post-genre conception being embraced within the festival. The music could be described as ‘electronic music’, created through sampling jazz, and was created by ZoiD, a project of Dublin-based musician, producer and DJ Daniel Jacobson (who released *Zoid Versus the Jazz Musicians of Ireland* in 2007).<sup>112</sup> The words ‘Foreign Rhythms and Diabolic Airs’, ‘Jazz, Blues, Funk’, and ‘Alternative Sounds’ cover the images prominently throughout the video, marketing the festival to a wider audience than the already converted jazz fan. The images also include a brief excerpt from a performance by the group Outer Spaceways Inc. The group was created specifically for the festival, and took part in some flash-mob-style performances, where a large group of extravagantly dressed musicians effectively take over a space with sound and vision.<sup>113</sup> Named after the Sun Ra album, *Outer Spaceways Inc*, the group was a tribute to the black American bandleader known for his theatrical performances, political awareness and cosmic philosophy, amongst other things. Invoking the sound and sights of the Sun Ra Arkestra

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109 ImprovisedMusicCo: Down With Jazz 2012 Promotional Video, 2012  
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Wjy5L7ZCus>> [Accessed 4 March 2016].

110 ImprovisedMusicCo: Down With Jazz 2013 Promotional Video, 2013  
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYBgZGapReM>> [Accessed 4 March 2016].

111 Improvised Music Company: ‘Down With Jazz DUBLIN’, 2013  
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYBgZGapReM>> [Accessed 16 February 2016].

112 ZOID: Zoid Vs The Jazz Musicians Of Ireland, (Diatribes, 2007)  
<<http://dlrecordings.bandcamp.com/album/zoid-vs-the-jazz-musicians-of-ireland-done019>> [Accessed 4 March 2016]. Jacobson also featured in the promotional photos in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4.

113 ‘Outer Spaceways Inc., Love: Live Music 2013, Meeting House Square’, YouTube,  
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gs1h4pT2Mdo&list=PLErO7gvxxdnDOGZnjlyJ34ELAo8pmZ7pe&index=11>> [Accessed 7 March 2016].

(the name of Sun Ra's group) is a statement of celebration of nonconformity and freedom, as well as a mass participation activity, which brings a somewhat disparate group of people together in participation of a single activity.

The Down With Jazz website from 2012 until 2015 also made connections between the past and the present, placing Irish jazz performers within a lineage of jazz performance. The images on the left border of the webpage pertain to jazz's past, images of early (predominantly black) jazz bands, Charlie Parker, Benny Goodman, American swing dancing and one or two rural Irish people in the 1930s.<sup>114</sup> In the right column, the images are of contemporary Irish jazz performers. The left to right placing of these images reflects a typical timeline, with the past being placed on the left and the contemporary on the right. The website states that the festival is 'contemporary and inclusive [...] with a line-up that celebrates our diversity today'.<sup>115</sup>

More direct links to the past are made in marketing for the 2016 festival that was branded '2016: A Jazz Rising'. 'Down With Jazz proclaims Free State. Free Jazz. Free Minds.' reads the IMC website, continuing, 'Would those culturally and socially oppressive attitudes of the '30s have existed if history had allowed us to hold fast to the ideals of the Proclamation?', drawing direct connections to the 1916 uprising and with the values and ideals of the 1916 Proclamation.<sup>116</sup> This idea was taken further in a competition that offered the opportunity to win a 'hand-printed Proclamation of Jazz'.<sup>117</sup>

The marketing campaign performs many functions: it connects with a national theme, it gives the festival a reason for being, and connects itself with the democratic, inclusive values that are inherent in the presentation of the 1916 Rising, especially in 2016, its centenary anniversary. At the same time it declares its alliance with the contemporary secularisation of all aspects of society, in its gentle mocking of the 1930s objections to jazz music and dancing. Killeen stated:

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114 Improvised Music Company, 'Down With Jazz DUBLIN'. The website has been updated and can now be found at <http://web.archive.org/web/20131115192207/http://www.downwithjazz.ie/>

115 *Ibid.*

116 'Down With Jazz festival 2016 | Improvised Music Company', <<http://www.improvisedmusic.ie/events/details/down-with-jazz-2016>> [Accessed 14 June 2016].

117 'Celebrating a different kind of centenary at... – Improvised Music Company', <<https://www.facebook.com/imcmusic/videos/vb.50649593152/10153903253723153/?type=2&theater>> [Accessed 14 June 2016].



It is that tongue-in-cheek that the press loves. We had a wealth of material to work with, we had videos that went viral, because people love to identify with old Ireland, because it's not that long ago, but at the same time, look at the global capital we live in today. [...] It's a hit with the Irish media and audiences because they identify with it, they go "This is great", and it's great to have a bit of fun like that.

At the same time it shows a high level of activity, and we always wanted Down With Jazz to be a gateway drug into jazz—price it really, really low, get as many people in as possible, give them a broad range of bands. That's really the framework of Down With Jazz.<sup>118</sup>

The Down With Jazz festival subverts authority, the Church, and tradition in its marketing and production in a way that emphasises the ideals of the IMC: the values of progressiveness and innovation. In addition, these values are given further strength by the authenticity of their connection to the past. By both celebrating all that is good about 'Irishness' and reflecting on how those musicking have moved on from the conservative past, the festival manages to embrace positive notions of tradition while positioning itself as progressive and anti-establishmentarian. The subversive attitude to authority and power is given a further twist when reflecting that these same attributes can be found within the IMC as an establishment within the jazz community. In addition, the IMC embraces the 'subversive' elements of the jazz scene, those that value innovation above tradition for example, and, in doing so, it brings them within the realms of 'acceptable', or, in Foucauldian terms, turns subjugated knowledge into official knowledge.

#### **5.4.6 The Jazz Festival as Social Function**

The sociality of jazz performance was once again highlighted at this event. The meeting and greeting of fellow musicians was, it seemed, just as important as the music being played. The different subgroups that musicians circulate in leads to situations in which many musicians may not see each other for some time. An event like this provides a surprisingly uncommon situation where many musicians are gathered in the one place. Beyond the structured environment of school, university, or college, musicians often find their main meeting place is at gigs, usually gigs they are doing themselves. This immediately reduces contact with musicians of the same instrument, with the exception of big bands. Musicians do, of course, meet at each other's gigs and at touring artists' gigs, but my research indicated that as people get older, have family commitments, or

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118 Killeen, Telephone interview.

are busy with their own gigs, the number of gigs they attend reduces dramatically. For the younger musicians I spoke to, many of them would attend two or three gigs a week; for older musicians, that number could be as little as one every six months, though they could still be playing their own gigs three or four times a week.

A festival setting allows for the realisation of a sense of community that is usually more imagined than lived. In 2013, I attended Down With Jazz as a researcher on the Friday night but slipped easily into the familiar routines of a musician. I greeted fellow musicians and we sat together where we could talk without interrupting the music. My field notes contained events that, although not remarkable, demonstrate negotiation of musicians' sense of place and belonging.

For example, I met with a musician I had not seen for a number of years from the west of Ireland. He informed me he had moved to Dublin and was planning on attending Newpark to do the BMus in jazz. I was surprised, as he was already a working musician, with a developed sense of jazz performance and a very good tone on his instrument. At the time of our meeting, I was with a good friend with whom I had spent many hours travelling to gigs and we had developed our own particular sense of humour. After a while, we started speaking to each other in this way but I could soon tell the musician from the west did not understand our humour, and seemed slightly uncomfortable. He asked if he was missing an 'inside' joke. I reassured him that we were just being silly. In this setting, as a researcher, I felt an uncomfortable sense of being 'part of the scene', with an outsider present who was soon to become part of the scene. It struck me at the time that our in-joke was just one of the boundaries that he was to encounter. Although someone who was part of the scene might not understand our joke either, they would nonetheless know that it was not a barrier. Although it is entirely possible that the musician I am speaking about had no thought about any of this, it still demonstrates the typical boundaries that are generated in social interactions and in communities more generally. Although the festival was celebrating a concept of 'Irish jazz', its location and the understandably high number of Dublin musicians attending created a sense of a specifically Dublin scene.

Another example that extends to the global scene concerns another conversation I had at the 2013 festival. I began speaking with a musician fifteen years or so younger than me, whom I rarely see but nonetheless feel I know reasonably well. We spoke of gigs and he told me how he was doing lots of 'money' gigs but was 'ready to quit'. We joked about

how younger musicians learn their cynicism from doing gigs with older musicians specifically at these types of gigs. We also took part in storytelling, sharing anecdotes about interactions with famous musicians until we discovered that he had met students from my home town of Perth, Western Australia, while in New York during part of a summer school. He felt that they had rather 'closed ears and attitudes' because they were more interested in attending 'standard' gigs rather than the gigs the teachers at the school were putting on. I suggested that perhaps the isolation of Perth and the rarity of trips to New York might make them keen to see their 'idols' rather than explore new territory; regardless, it was a telling exchange. Upon reflection, it occurred to me that almost all of the small exchanges between jazz scene participants serve a purpose of locating ourselves within both a local and global scene, highlighting what is important to us and what we value. Festivals can provide a space where we meet people from the same 'scene' but are exposed to different values than the ones we encounter in our day-to-day daily musical lives.

While musicians can be very much 'on the scene' and feel a part of it, they may yet have very little socialisation beyond their immediate musical circles. Long-term relationships and children obviously link into these different types of interaction with the scene, with musicians with families of their own usually spending less time out late at night at jazz venues. A festival provides a different setting for socialisation among musicians to take place. On the Friday night I introduced around eight people to one another (not all musicians) and was introduced to three musicians whom I had heard of but had not met before. One of those was a bass player, and we both felt like we knew other. We agreed that had someone asked us, we would have said we 'knew each other'. We were so familiar with each other's name that the person 'existed' in our imagination; it was only when we met face to face for the first time that we realised that we had, in fact, never met.

The theme of a thriving Irish jazz scene and the good festival feeling contrasted with the slightly cynical attitude in the banter of many musicians that I spoke to at the 2013 festival. Although the musicians would have viewed their talk as private and good natured, it may have been difficult for an outsider to view some of the conversations as anything but cynical. I am not passing judgement on the musicians involved but acknowledging this form of communicating as being a common and acceptable way of socialising. A possible explanation for this method of communication is that it allows

for a safe way to approach potentially sensitive topics. Bass players, for example, discussed the various politics of who had played in whose band. There is an inherent danger in musicians having a conversation of this sort.

Take, for example, the case of two musicians discussing various band leaders they have both worked for. One musician may have been dropped from a band and replaced by the other, possibly because their musical style was not favoured by the band leader. The other musician may know this, but rather than discuss how a change in style or attitude could help in future engagements, a much safer option is to discuss the band leader, in particular any humorous or negative aspects of his/her character, without giving any hint as to their own knowledge of each other's weaknesses, perceived or real.

Although I am aware of countless times these types of conversations have occurred in the Dublin scene, I have rarely encountered the situation where musicians would openly discuss each other's weaknesses, and never in a social situation such as a festival. Topics such as who has worked for whom are skilfully navigated, so as to avoid any awkward confrontations or implications of lack of skill or ability. Musicians once again place themselves within musical contexts, creating and maintaining identity through relation to their musical day-to-day lives. Because a musician's 'musical' identity is so important and central to them, to openly criticise it is essentially taboo. That is not to say that musicians do not engage in any form of critique—it is not unheard of for a musician to say on a jazz gig, 'You're speeding up', but it is perhaps much more likely in that instance to hear carefully depersonalised comments such as 'It's speeding up,' 'I felt like you were ahead of me,' or to make a call to the group as a whole, as in 'We need to watch the tempo there'. To bring this back to the social encounter of the festival, if one of the aims of the festival was to bring the community together, then that was achieved, and the way by which the community identify themselves, by reference to the music, was evident in the social interactions that took place.

#### **5.4.7 Identity of a Jazz Festival**

Earlier, I spoke of how the jazz community defines itself in opposition to other musical communities, and the tension that occurs when trying to negotiate the broadening of how we understand jazz while at the same time utilising the label of jazz as one that defines the group as separate from other musical genres. *Down With Jazz* epitomises these issues as it both draws connections to the past, to tradition, both Irish and the global jazz tradition, while simultaneously pushing for a broadening of the scope of

what jazz *is*. At the same time, the organisers of a festival such as Down With Jazz presumably want to avoid the criticism of ‘dumbing down’ that has been directed at festivals such as the Cork Jazz Festival.<sup>119</sup>

In fact, jazz festivals around the world have, in the face of declining ticket sales, been embracing more popular artists in order to bring in the crowds and continue operating at all and, globally speaking, Down With Jazz represents ‘jazz’, as it is commonly understood, more so than many festivals. As a publicly-funded organisation, rather than a profit-driven organisation, the IMC is maintaining a focus on the values that are important to it, in its attempt to expand the boundaries of how jazz is understood. Rather than bring in crowds with popular rock and pop acts, it presents groups that display these values through their ‘musicking’, while still attempting to bring in crowds through marketing and low ticket prices. For example, Alarmist, I would argue, could be seen to represent values such as originality, technical prowess, and embracing a post-genre approach. Other groups, such as the Booka Brass Band and Toot Sweet and the Shadowman, represent a connection to an imagined past of New Orleans mardi gras celebration, and, as such, are suited as late-night festival acts, which is where they were placed in the proceedings.

As I walked around the 2014 festival, one festival attendee remarked about the band OKO, ‘This is some modern take on jazz’. Though it is true that OKO is representative of its time, the music also has many elements that have been present in the wider spectrum of jazz for some time. The band also borrows heavily from rock (in its broadest sense) and avant-garde music. The music has ambient sections with no beat, and periods of long, continuous grooves. For audiences who have only heard their jazz in hotel foyers, however, it is a modern take on jazz. Keyboardist Darragh O’Kelly brings out a ‘keytar’ for the final song, symbolising to me at least, that this is a band that embraces humour. The keytar does not usually enjoy a reputation as a serious instrument and, by swapping to it in the final piece, O’Kelly references 1980s pop bands, adding yet more irony to the occasion.

Another attendee told me that he did not get to see many gigs because he was a DJ but that he had a ‘big interest in jazz’, and wanted to ‘support this sort of thing’ as he ‘felt it

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119 Clayton-Lea, Tony: ‘All that jazz? Cork festival’s programme divides fans’, *Irish Times*, 26 October 2015, 3.

was important'.<sup>120</sup> While it was impossible to pin down exactly what 'this sort of thing' was from my brief conversation with him, I got the impression that, more than the music being played, the festival symbolised a form of protest against the anti-jazz movement of the 1930s that was important to him. Whatever his interest in jazz, however, he left for food while Blue Eyed Hawk played because 'I don't really do singers'.<sup>121</sup> While Blue Eyed Hawk was my favourite band of the day, and, for me, strongly within the contemporary jazz spectrum, I spoke to one person who said they 'didn't understand' the band, and another who said 'I wouldn't call this jazz'. Meanwhile, another musician who considers himself in some ways on the periphery of the jazz scene, but who is still an accomplished jazz musician, said to me during the Alarmist set, 'It's sort of a double irony isn't it? Because there's the irony of calling a jazz festival, 'Down With Jazz', but then they're playing all this music that isn't really jazz!'.<sup>122</sup>

The background music to my discussion with then director Gerry Godley at the 2014 festival was that year's Irish representative at the 12 Points festival, Alarmist. In the context of Alarmist not signifying as a 'jazz' band, Godley said, 'I've no interest in the moral or aesthetic high ground. I'm trying to normalise this; these people are doing what they would normally do on a Friday night, they just happen to be doing it here where it's being branded as a jazz festival, and somewhere in the back of their mind that will sink in. I deliberately broadened the church this year.'<sup>123</sup>

Alarmist is described on the Bandcamp website as having a 'genre-defying fusion of influences'.<sup>124</sup> The tags used to describe its music are 'electronic, experimental, experimental rock, jazz, jazz rock, math rock, math-rock, post rock, post-rock and Ireland'; however, for the most part, the audience members I spoke to had an easier time identifying Alarmist as a 'rock' band.<sup>125</sup> Godley is more than aware of this, and a 'jazz' festival, full of music readily identifiable as 'mainstream jazz' would fail to fulfil the IMC's aims on many levels. The question would need to be asked: Is there a large enough pool of musicians in Ireland to choose from in order to fill a weekend 'jazz' festival to a high enough quality? In addition, would such a festival capture the public

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<sup>120</sup> Informal conversation, 2014.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Brady, Kevin, Informal conversation, 2014.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> 'Alarmist', Alarmist, <<http://alarmist.bandcamp.com>> [Accessed 3 March 2016].

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

imagination enough to bring in enough audience members to justify the large cost of staging such a festival? Alarmist was part of Godley's attempt to broaden the audience for jazz, by introducing a band that is given a jazz identity by virtue of having jazz influences—rather than coming from a tradition of jazz performance—and a focus on improvisation. In doing so, the IMC effectively introduce Alarmist as part of the jazz community. Whether the members of Alarmist want to belong to the jazz community is something I have not established, though I have my doubts.

The same could be said for other bands presented and for many of the members of even the more easily identifiable jazz bands. Another example of the post-genre ideology of the festival is the group D.F.F.. Its website highlights the multiple influences of the group, none of which are jazz: 'A true melting pot of music, D.F.F. is a new supergroup marking the point where everything from chamber pop and Irish trad to the influence of Congolese "guitar sorcerer" Franco converge in glorious sound.'<sup>126</sup> In contrast to the typical jazz tradition, the leader of the group stated almost all of the rhythms to the audience: 'We have a prize to the best dancer in 5/4'; 'We have one jazz dancer'; 'This is a Congolese rhythm'; 'Can anyone dance to a slip jig? Here's your chance'.<sup>127</sup> Again, while listening, I heard several comments along the lines of 'I wouldn't call this jazz', although these were observations rather than criticisms of the music.<sup>128</sup> Similarly, while Ensemble Ériu has a number of musicians recognisable from the Irish jazz scene (four out of the seven musicians have formally studied jazz), the group 'draw[s] on a wealth of creative sources to perform arrangements of Irish traditional music rooted in the styles of West and North County Clare'.<sup>129</sup> With both D.F.F. and Ensemble Ériu, IMC are again 'broadening the church' of jazz, in this case incorporating groups that display 'Irishness'—in their choice of traditional repertoire—while embracing pluralism, inclusivity and improvisation.

While the Guinness Jazz Festival is typified as having a conservative programme, of eliminating jazz for the sake of more popular styles of music, and has been consequently lambasted in the media for doing so, the Down With Jazz festival and its organisers, the IMC, have fostered almost the opposite reputation—that of being

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126 *Hot Press*, as quoted at 'D. F. F.', D. F. F., <<http://www.dffmusic.com/>> [Accessed 29 February 2016].

127 D.F.F. onstage announcement, Down With Jazz, 2014.

128 Informal conversation, 2014.

129 'About | Ensemble Ériu', <<http://ensembleeriu.com/about/>> [Accessed 29 February 2016].



progressive, forward thinking, and innovative.<sup>130</sup> Yet, in some senses, the Down With Jazz festival is participating in a very similar model of broadening the scope of the festival so as to appeal to more people. There are some significant differences, of course: Down With Jazz is centred around Irish-based musicians, and is not afraid to pick both ‘festival’ choices (for example, the Booka Brass Band or Toot Sweet and the Shadowman) as well as more ‘contemporary jazz’ that may be slightly more challenging for the non-jazz initiated (OKO and Lauren Kinsella may fit into this group). In addition, Down With Jazz could not be accused of not having high quality performances at every point, regardless of labelling. In contrast, the sheer number of events on the Guinness ‘Jazz Trail’ inevitably leads to performances by musicians with varying levels of musicianship, which in no way necessarily takes away from the enjoyment of the musicking, but still needs to be acknowledged.

To bring myself into the conversation, the purpose of the above examination of the 2014 programme is not to suggest that I disagree with the programming of the jazz festival: I consider the programming to be innovative and good for the scene as a whole. My point is that the use of jazz, as shown throughout the history of Irish jazz, is to serve to achieve the aims of the participants at a particular time, and is in a constant state of flux and change. Rather than being something that people ignore or do not notice, however, or being part of a ‘natural progression’ or evolution, this change is constantly negotiated and contested, much like the identity of those involved in the music. The flows of power that exist within scenes play a large part in mediating how participants use jazz to serve their purposes. They both enable and constrain participants as they attempt to make sense of their own involvement with the scene.

Although only a minority of Dublin-based musicians are involved with the festival each year, its presence is nonetheless felt. For a young and upcoming musician, the festival represents an opportunity for recognition and exposure that is difficult to come by, a potential stepping stone to further festivals and playing possibilities. It is clear to musicians that having a group that coincides with the IMC’s aesthetics and values, foregrounding innovation and creativity, increases the chances of playing there, especially for unestablished musicians with little or no track record.

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130 Farren, Grainne: ‘Does Cork still count as jazz?’, Independent.ie, (2013)  
<<http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/music/does-cork-still-count-as-jazz-29655350.html>>  
[Accessed 15 January 2015].

The conversation with Godley (with Alarmist playing in the background), was brought into context when we were approached by pianist/keyboardist Leopoldo Osio, who said wryly, and with a smile, ‘Are you enjoying the jazz?’ In fact, Godley addressed the issue directly onstage saying: ‘Someone said on Twitter, “But is it jazz?” Well, that’s a debate that’s been going on since the beginning of this music.’<sup>131</sup> Jazz as an identity is shown here within the context of the Down With Jazz festival to be in flux. As throughout the history of jazz in Ireland, jazz means many things to different people and is used by participants in ways that serve their needs at the time. Just as the Catholic Church pointed to jazz as a symbol of undesired foreign influences in order to create a national identity that coincided with its values, IMC turns this idea on its head, and jazz is used as a symbol of a new Irish identity that embraces pluralism, diversity, and change.

### 5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has taken the issues and concepts arising from the ethnographic data and applied them specifically to one of the Dublin jazz scene’s most influential institutions, the Improvised Music Company. Using the *Sunday Times* article, I demonstrate how the IMC are represented, along with Newpark, in this particular article, as representing innovation and creativity, in a binary opposition to the wider scene. Although only a single article, this example represents how the jazz scene is often understood in a binary manner, by both participants and onlookers seeking to understand it.

Concepts of innovation and creativity are markers of authority and authenticity within jazz scenes and scene participants come into conflict when their values are scene as incongruent. The case of Nigel Mooney and the IMC Artists venture demonstrates how the institutions and individuals can easily clash as participants attempt to navigate their personal pathways within scenes. The authority of such institutions apply not only to the direct power to employ or ignore individuals and groups, to claim for their own what is ‘creative’ and ‘innovative’ but also to the more indirect sense of power that flows through and shapes discourse, enabling all institutions to contribute to stylistic, musical and cultural change within scenes.

The Down With Jazz festival provides a fine example of jazz identity being constructed and negotiated in a way that involves both the authority of institutions and the agency of

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131 Godley interview.

participants, including musicians, sound engineers, audience members and more. By engaging with the past, the IMC is creating a sense of Irish jazz history, and therefore of belonging, that previously did not exist. By putting itself in opposition to the anti-jazz movement it is able to portray both itself and jazz as not just representing a genre of music, but also the values and ideals connected to its understanding of that genre.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study contributes to knowledge on two separate issues: How do participants create meaning and identity within the Dublin jazz scene? How has the Irish jazz scene evolved over time? The importance of the second question was revealed throughout the study, as the lack of pre-existing research into Irish jazz history became evident. More generally, the Irish jazz scene has been significantly underrepresented in jazz studies. Beyond investigations regarding the anti-jazz movement of the 1930s, virtually no academic work has been undertaken concerning the development and contemporary performance of jazz in the country. Reasons for this include the late development of jazz as a higher education subject in the country, the size of the population, and the corresponding size of the Irish jazz scene. While many European countries have academic jazz departments within third level institutions, Irish institutions involved with musicology have almost exclusively focused on either Western art music or traditional Irish music.<sup>1</sup> This study contributes to a growing area of study that examines how jazz spread and developed in Europe in interaction with, yet separately from American jazz.

This conclusion will synthesise the various themes that have arisen throughout the study. In it, I will demonstrate the importance of revealing the hidden Irish jazz history, the linking of the development of the scene with the scene today, key issues that have been revealed through the research and how the research has brought to light important issues in looking at jazz and jazz performance, especially within the context of local scenes. I make suggestions for future approaches to the topic and areas that are important for Irish jazz studies.

Jazz studies has evolved as a field within academia to the point that any number of epistemic frameworks can now be used to approach the topic. As explained, this study has taken a two-fold approach to investigating the creation of meaning and identity on the Dublin jazz scene. In order to properly explore contemporary jazz performance in Dublin, it was imperative to conduct archival research since very limited published

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<sup>1</sup> Jazz studies has a tradition of being investigated by scholars based outside of traditional musicology, as is the case with Irish scholars investigating the reception of early jazz and related areas. PhD candidate Karol Anne Mullaney-Dignam was based in the Department of History in National University of Ireland, Maynooth, while Sean Shanagher was in the School of Communications, Dublin City University. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin's work was published in the *New Hibernia Review* by the Centre for Irish Studies, Douglas C. Riach's in the *Journal of American Studies*, and while Eileen Hogan's work was published in the *Jazz Research Journal*, she was based at the School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork, Ireland.

work on the subject was available. However, like Berliner and Monson, I believe in the importance of the vernacular in jazz performance.<sup>2</sup> Attempting to impose academic methodologies that view music as absolute onto a style of performance that has community interaction at its core, limits the depth of understanding we can have. While I do not argue against the validity and usefulness of the many other approaches to jazz studies, I do feel that the picture is less complete without the contribution of the vernacular. For this reason, I utilised ethnographic methods to gather data from the contemporary scene, namely through interviews and fieldwork.

My work has looked to and adapted the approaches of a number of different scholars. While Travis Jackson demonstrated how different elements of the New York scene interact with each other and with a blues aesthetic, I rejected the paradigm of a blues aesthetic for my own study, finding it did not explain how many of the participants understood jazz performance.<sup>3</sup> That said, Jackson was a primary influence and inspiration in my decision to focus on a jazz scene in my research. Utilising Jackson's ethnomusicological methods and approaches, I drew from Nathan Bakkum in foregrounding the day-to-day lived lives of musicians, rather than focusing on 'end products' such as career highlights.<sup>4</sup> The work of Tony Whyton provided a theoretical perspective through which to understand participation with jazz as a culturally mediated activity, invariably engaging with a mythology of jazz. My approach builds upon the ethnographically based work of Berliner, Monson, Jackson and Bakkum, while utilising Whyton's view that jazz's ability to 'transcend national and geographical borders and to challenge cultural stereotyping' is one of its central qualities.<sup>5</sup> Following on from important work done by Finnegan and Cottrell, I studied a culture in my own 'backyard', using my experience and knowledge of the scene to provide insights not available to 'the outsider'.<sup>6</sup> By foregrounding the voices of scene participants through fieldwork and interviews, I demonstrate how the scene is a site of contestation and

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2 Berliner, Paul F.: *Thinking in jazz*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5-6; Monson, Ingrid: *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 6.

3 Jackson, Travis A.: *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene*, (Chicago: University of California Press, 2012), 214.

4 Bakkum, Nathan: 'Don't push, don't pull: Jazz rhythm section interaction and musical change', Ph.D. diss., (Illinois: The University of Chicago, 2009).

5 Whyton, Tony: 'Europe and the New Jazz Studies', in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts*, eds. Cerchiari, Luca, Cugny, Laurent and Kerschbaumer, Franz (Boston, Mass: Northeastern University Press, 2012), 370.

6 Finnegan, Ruth: *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town*, Reprint (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989); Stephen Cottrell: *Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience*, (Ashgate, 2004).

negotiation, where multiple perspectives exist simultaneously, reflecting different approaches to engaging with jazz mythology.

There was a great need for work of this type, not only to document the Dublin jazz scene at present but to recognise a tradition of jazz performance within Ireland. Indeed, the introduction of jazz to Ireland in 1919 can be considered more as a moment within a continuum of black music and musicians in Ireland rather than a starting point. This is especially true considering the role Ireland played as a part of an entertainment touring network, in particular the larger regional centres of Dublin, Cork and Belfast. The reception and mediation of jazz was unique in Ireland due to the political events taking place. Furthermore, the events of Irish independence need to be recognised as not only having a great effect on the development of jazz in Ireland but also on how the history of jazz in Ireland has been treated by both scholars and commentators. As a country constructing a new national identity, the Church and state were particularly interested in maintaining control of cultural activities, ensuring they remained 'Irish' and reflected what they associated with 'Irishness', that is, a high morality connected to a sense of rural values.

Ireland is usually ignored in studies on early jazz in Britain and the United Kingdom. This gives the false impression that it was not involved with early jazz or with jazz's predecessors. The early years of jazz in Ireland need to be considered in the context of jazz in United Kingdom, especially given that the country was part of the United Kingdom until 1922. In addition, scholars working on early jazz in the United Kingdom need to be aware of this and incorporate it into their work so that there is a greater sense of what was happening at this time.

Scholars have been critiqued for attempting to portray the history of jazz as a smooth linear journey that connects each movement clearly to the next as different versions of essentially the same music. That ragtime is considered a forerunner to bebop is perhaps as much true as country music being a forerunner to the glam rock of the 1980s. The constructions of history are never a simple matter of recording 'facts' and inevitably serve a purpose for those writing the history. However altruistic the aims are, those involved in such tasks are viewing the past from a particular perspective and cannot view it from another position. My historical overview of jazz in Ireland is no different, adding urgency to my call for immediate oral history work to be undertaken within the Irish jazz scene, such as the recordings made by Ronan Guilfoyle in conversation with

Charles Meredith shortly before Meredith's death in 2013, in order to represent the scene from the multiple perspectives of those involved in it.<sup>7</sup>

There is a rich past of jazz performance within Dublin and Ireland, demonstrating that jazz has been used by performers and listeners to create meaning and identity consistently since the music was first introduced. Furthermore, the changing role of jazz performance has been a recurring theme over time. Indeed, this study places the earliest jazz performance in Ireland as 15 February 1919, in the midst of political unrest on the island. It is of interest to note that the controversy that erupted in November the same year regarding the licensing of 35 Dawson Street was directly concerned with the relationship that both jazz music and dancing had with institutional bodies.<sup>8</sup> The incident provided an opportunity for groups concerned with public morality to frame jazz discourse within racist and xenophobic parameters to serve their own purposes. It is clear that from its inception, jazz was immediately viewed as a racialized music, that is, its reception was inextricably connected to notions of blackness and foreignness. Indeed, Deveaux places ethnicity at the gravitational core of the narrative of jazz.<sup>9</sup> Almost simultaneously, an alternative jazz discourse was being constructed by the activity of the founder of the Athlone Musical Society, Harry Foy. Foy's advertisement for his services playing jazz demonstrates a narrative of jazz as 'respectable' entertainment. The centrality of ethnicity to jazz therefore is challenged immediately and issues of authenticity come into play. In the context of a European jazz concept, should Foy be considered as an early innovator, culturally if not musically, or, should he be regarded as many historians have Paul Whiteman, a white male who appropriated black music for profit and gain? Indeed, our changing treatment of historical occurrences can sometimes say more about our own culture than cultures of earlier times. The one consistent element of jazz scenes throughout the entire history of the music has been the multiplicity of approaches to jazz by participants.

The unrest occurring throughout this time makes the development of jazz in Ireland quite different to that of other countries. The newly-established nation meant that at a time when national identity building was all-important, jazz was immediately marked as

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7 Guilfoyle, Ronan: 'Mostly music: Chas Meredith - a pioneer of Irish Jazz', <<http://ronanguil.blogspot.com/2013/10/chas-meredith-pioneer-of-irish-jazz.html>> [Accessed 27 June 2016].

8 'Is the Jazz Immoral?', *Freemans Journal*, 25 November 1919, 3.

9 DeVeaux, Scott: 'Constructing the jazz tradition: Jazz historiography', *Black American Literature Forum*, 25, (1991), 529.



foreign, exotic and unsuitable for the promotion of 'Irish' values. Jazz music and dance came increasingly under pressure from the Church and state in the form of legislation and policy decisions. The increasing momentum in this area saw the rise of the anti-jazz movement, which contributed, to the establishment of the Dance Halls Act of 1935. Although there has been some attention paid to this period of history, no other studies have engaged with the continuation of jazz in the periods following the anti-jazz movement.

Archival records reveal that the period from the mid-1930s through the 1940s saw both an easing of the negative press attention directed at jazz and an increase in activities surrounding the involvement with the music. Numerous institutions arose including the Irish Rhythm Club, the Dublin No. 1 Rhythm Club and the South Dublin Rhythm Club along with the publication of the *Hot Notes* periodical and the jazz column in the *People's Weekly*, all demonstrating the existence of a jazz scene that has, prior to this study, been unacknowledged. Each institution brings with it participants of course, listeners, musicians, promoters, salespeople, equipment repairers and so on, all involved to a greater or lesser degree.

At all points throughout Irish jazz history it is clear that the music has meant different things to different people. Indeed, the contestation and negotiation that is evident in the current scene has been present throughout the history of the music. This includes the entertainment/art binary that is a significant source of tension within the contemporary scene and also features predominantly throughout the development of the scene. In staking a place for the importance of jazz, participants have consistently needed to differentiate between jazz and popular music, while still needing to maintain a critical mass of activity to sustain the practice.

While the jazz scene has grown in size over time, a common thread between past and present is how participants use jazz scenes as a paradigm through which to make sense of their own position within musical society. In addition, the way jazz is mediated through album covers, magazines, the internet, books, liner notes, anecdotes and so on, provides ways for people to identify with values and ideologies through musical participation. This research has consistently shown that the multiplicity of experiences within the jazz scene demonstrate it cannot be studied as a fixed entity, but instead, must be seen as representing changing conceptions of how participants understand jazz to function within their own experiences and day-to-day lives.

The majority of studies within jazz focus on the highest level of production—the elite performers, canonical recordings, important periods or iconic festivals. In contrast, this study has taken a more inclusive definition of jazz performance in order to understand the plethora of differing paradigms that exist for participants within scenes. Attempting to understand a jazz scene without taking into account the majority of activities that take place within it would be like an anthropological study that was only concerned with weddings and funerals in order to understand an unexamined society. While we can learn a lot from the values and ideals that are celebrated and explored during the production of large-scale, high-value events, it is the more ordinary events that take place regularly that form the *habitus* of individual experience. It is here that participants contest, negotiate, explore, celebrate and affirm issues through interactions within the scene.

Much of individuals' day-to-day lives within jazz scenes involve interactions with institutions. Rather than being a sub-scene outside of society, jazz scenes exist largely within systems populated by institutions. The relationship of individuals to institutions is based upon flows of power and inevitably institutions hold a greater sway on scenes than individual participants. Institutions often decide who can play where, for how long or how often, for how much money; who will get newspaper, radio or internet exposure; who will get employment and so on. Power in this sense should be seen not as one force wielding a stick at the other, demanding them to yield, but rather as always present and operating through relationships and interactions, operating alongside discourse in constraining and enabling agency and action.

Individuals have agency within these flows of power but can also encounter difficulties in negotiating the scene. An individual's musical ability, social circles, personal tastes, in short, their *habitus*, all influence the pathway they travel in coming to the scene and interacting with it. Success within a scene is primarily defined through interaction with it, inevitably meaning interactions with institutions. For those who display abilities and skills that are compatible with the institutions' needs, this presents little or no problem. Participants who find themselves not in demand, on the other hand, must negotiate their position and identity to either create a niche for themselves, adapt to the wider system or reconsider their relationship with the scene. My work demonstrates the complex relationships that occur between institutions and individuals, focusing on the flows of power that can enable and constrain participants' activities and decisions. It illustrates

how institutions directly affect the daily activity, and therefore stylistic change, within the Dublin jazz scene.

This study has highlighted some of the most important aspects that reverberate through Irish jazz history and still play out today. Most importantly, it demonstrates how jazz scenes are constructions that are used for the purposes of individuals, reflecting and constructing value systems. The role of institutions is shown to be ever present and unavoidable in jazz scenes as entities that both enable and constrain day-to-day activity, directly effecting stylistic change in the process.

Importantly, this study demonstrates how the activities of all participants within a jazz scene contribute to the multi-faceted nature of the scene and how individual and institutional activities are inherently focused on promoting a particular viewpoint as part of their negotiation with a wider scene. This is not an accusation but an unavoidable truth, and an acknowledgement of my own participation in this on-going process. The right to speak on behalf of the community is often connected with, to use Tony Whyton's terms, claims of authority, authorship and authenticity, and a connection with jazz mythology. By looking at the jazz scene both as an inclusive community of practice, and as personal constructions through which participants negotiate the creation of meaning and identity through interactions with individuals, institutions and with jazz mythology, our understanding of jazz performance can be enhanced. This understanding can be carried through to institutional level where participants' negotiation with a wider scene can be recognised and strategies developed in order to enhance positive dialogue and discourse, recognising and encouraging multiple perspectives. There is a huge potential for future research within Irish jazz studies including the immediate need for the establishment of an Irish jazz archive to collect and maintain resources for future researchers. Oral history interviews need to be conducted in an urgent manner with the remaining participants of jazz scenes of the 1950s and 1960s. There is considerable research to be conducted on the early flow of musicians between Dublin and Europe, in particular London. Additionally, the gathering of the early Irish jazz periodicals for use by researchers is essential, as is research into the Irish Federation of Musicians, an institution that largely controlled the dance band scene of the 1950s. Further research also needs to be done on the development of jazz outside of Dublin, in particular Cork and the jazz scene of Northern Ireland, known for producing remarkable musicians throughout their history.

Regardless of how a participant self-identifies within the jazz scene, it is important for musicians in Ireland to understand that the choice to make jazz performance a part of their lives has also been made by many before them over almost the last one hundred years. Although jazz styles and definitions may constantly change, there is an embodied satisfaction that jazz performance brings, evidenced by the many musicians who have chosen to make it a part of their lives. It is equally important that the findings of this study be incorporated into future policy development, both in academia and the arts sector, recognising the role that jazz has played in the musical heritage of Ireland far beyond the well-known anti-jazz movement of the 1920s. Finally, it is vital that higher educational institutions in Ireland engage with the wider European and global jazz studies community in their research and dialogue, bringing Ireland into the European discussion beyond the success of IMC's 12 Points festival. Recognition of the ongoing community of jazz performance practice within Ireland is essential for understanding and acknowledging the Irish jazz scene in all its manifestations, past, present and future.

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## Appendix A - Table of Irish Jazz Recordings

This list of over 300 Irish jazz recordings was first constructed through my own knowledge and research. I then shared the spreadsheet with the Irish jazz community via social media and invited contributions and comments. I again used an inclusive definition of jazz, using artists own categorisation of an album to decide on its inclusion. This list is ongoing and can be accessed and added to at:

<http://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xIDbHqzzz87LRPivY2eIBfjibueev03BuYMbQXmYno4/edit?usp=sharing>

I would also like to note a 78 record in the possession of Ronan Guilfoyle that was given to him by Charles Meredith. It is labelled as follows:

Irish Recording Company Limited – Personal Recording – 24 February 1949

Side 1: Honeysuckle Rose & 12 Bars

Side 2: On the Sunny Side of the Street

Personnel:

Kevin O'Doherty – Alto Saxophone and Clarinet

Paddy Walsh – String Bass

Darryl Burrowes – Drums

Niall Nelson - Piano

Table 1: Irish Jazz Recordings

Artist/Group Name	Album Name	Year Released	Label
Rodney Foster's Jazzmen	Swingin' Shillelaghs	1961	Beltona
Rodney Foster's Jazzmen	When Irish Eyes Are Smiling / Slattery's Mounted Fut	1961	Beltona
Rodney Foster's Jazzmen	Galway Bay	1962	Decca
Jazz Coasters	Live at the Merrion Inn	1974	Hazeville Records
Louis Stewart	Louis the First	1975	Hawk Records
Louis Stewart and Peter Ind	Baubles, Bangles and Beads	1976	Wave
Ronnie Scott's presents Louis Stewart	Milesian Source	1977	Pye Records
Louis Stewart	Out on His Own	1977	Livia Records
John Wadham / Louis Stewart	Drums and Friends	1978	Livia Records

Louis Stewart / Brian Dunning	Alone Together	1979	Livia Records
Louis Stewart with John Taylor / Sam Jones / Billy Higgins	I Thought About You	1979	Lee Lambert Records
Noel Kelehan Quintet	Ozone	1979	Cargo Records
The Jazz Phantoms with guest Louis Stewart	Yesterdays	1979	Philips Records
Louis Stewart & Red Lion Trio	Louis Stewart & Red Lion Trio	1980	Decibelle
Jazz Workshop	Sounds Exciting	1982	
Laila Dalseth Quintet Featuring Louis Stewart	Daydreams	1984	Hot Club Records
Hotfoot	Hotfoot	1986	Mystery Records
Louis Stewart & 4Sure	Good News	1986	Villa
Louis Stewart / Martin Taylor	Acoustic Guitar Duets	1986	Livia Records
Maurice Meunier / Louis Stewart / Michel Gaudry	Paris-Dublin	1986	Bloomdidi
Len McCarthy and The Guinness Jazz All Stars	Len McCarthy & The Guinness Jazz All Stars	1986	Livia Records
Dara O Lochlainn and Jazz Odyssey / The Apex Jazz Band	Jazz News	1987	Jazz News
Puck Fair	Fair Play	1987	Windham Hill
Ronan Guilfoyle / Simon Nabatov	Six by Two	1988	Terrace Records
Four in One w/ Pat LaBarbera	Ask a Simple Question	1989	Terrace Records
Spike Robinson and Louis Stewart	Three For the Road	1989	Hep Records
David Liebman	Tomorrow's Expectations	1990	IMC
Louis Stewart	In a Mellow Tone	1990	Jardis Records
Louis Stewart / Heiner Franz	Winter Song	1990	Jardis Records
Louis Stewart et al	String-Time	1990	Villa
Honor Heffernan	Chasing the Moon	1991	Cargo Records
Spike Robinson with the Jim Doherty Trio	One Man In His Time	1991	Cargo Records
Louis Stewart	Louis Stewart Quartet featuring Michael Moore	1992	Cecilia Records
Café Orchestra	Tres Café	1993	
Louis Stewart	Joycenotes	1993	Villa
Louis Stewart	Overdrive	1993	Hep
Zrazy	Give It All Up	1994	Alfi

Brendan Doyle	Wiggle Squiggle	1995	IMC
Café Orchestra	After Hours	1995	
Christine Tobin	Aililiu	1995	Babel
Guilfoyle - Nielsen Trio	Part One	1995	IMC
Rory McGuinness Quintet	Groovin' High	1995	IMC
Septet Music	Septet Music	1995	IMC
The Irish Jazz Orchestra	Gravity Still Works	1995	Coyote Records
Café Orchestra	Topaz	1996	
Christine Tobin	Yell of the Gazelle	1996	Babel
Cluskey Hopkins Band	Guinness Jazz Show	1996	
David Murphy	Hong Kong	1996	
Keith Copeland Trio	The Irish Connection	1996	SteepleChase
Neil Everett	Late Nights & Early Mornings	1996	Mobius Records
Richie Buckley Quartet	In Arrears	1996	IMC
Tommy Halferty Quartet	Anda	1996	IMC
David O'Rourke	The Prize	1997	Nighttown Records
John Donegan	Song for Ciara	1997	Jayde Records
Keith Copeland Trio	Round Trip	1997	SteepleChase
Khanda	Khanda	1997	IMC
Ronan Guilfoyle	Devsirme	1997	IMC
Saoco	Descargar Saoco	1997	IMC
Tommy Halferty / Mike Nielsen	In Two	1997	IMC
King's Head Jazz Band	Live at the King's Head	1997	
Christine Tobin	House of Women	1998	Babel
Cluskey Hopkins Band	Down Behind the Abbey	1998	
David Liebman	After Dark	1998	IMC
Hugh Buckley	Yes Indeed	1998	Improvised Music Co.
The Improvised Music Ensemble	Sundials	1998	IMC
Carl Money	Underground Jazz	1998	
Café Orchestra	Feelgood	1999	
Justin Carroll 3	Quirk	1999	IMC
Keith Copeland Trio	Live at Limerick	1999	Steeplechase
Louis Stewart et al	I Wished on the Moon	1999	Jardis Records
Ronan Guilfoyle's Lingua Franca	Bird	1999	IMC



The Jazz Ladds	The Jazz Ladds at the Harp	1999	
Tom O'Hare	Tom O'Hare Plays Vibes, Jazz and Salsa	1999	
Zrazy	Private Wars	1999	Alfi
Paul O'Donnell	Live!Jazz	1999	
Christine Tobin	Deep Song	2000	Babel
Cluskey Hopkins Band	Treasure Island	2000	
Mike Nielsen	Solo At Garden City	2000	Mixen Music
Siobhan Pettit	Verse & Chorus	2000	
Stephen Keogh, Bill Charlap, Louis Stewart, Mark Hodgson	Gift	2000	Ashebrowne Productions
Tom O'Hare / Gunther Fischer	This One's For Milt Jackson	2000	Moodjazz
Clare Horgan	The Stolen Child	2001	
David O'Rourke and Lewis Nash's Celtic Jazz Collective	Aisling	2001	
Hugh Buckley	Spirit Level	2001	
Louis Stewart	Beyond Baubles, Bangles and Beads	2001	
Louis Stewart	Street of Dreams	2001	Jardis Records
Mary Coughlan	Long Honeymoon	2001	
Professor Peter O'Brien / Doctor Ralph Sutton	A Stride Odyssey	2001	
Richie Buckley	Your Love is Here	2001	
Susannah De Wrixon	She Swims in the Sea	2002	
Tom O'Hare / Gunther Fischer	For John Lewis & the MJQ	2002	Moodjazz
Black Magic Big Band	This Could Be The Start	2003	
Christine Tobin	You Draw The Line	2003	Babel
Cluskey Hopkins Band with Paul Hart	Live at Oxmanstown Theatre	2003	
Ellen Demos Featuring Mike Nielsen	Osmosis	2003	
Khanda & the Karnatak College of Percussion	Five Cities	2003	IMC/Hatch 21
Patrick Collins / Drazen Derrick	The Paris Concert	2003	
Professor Peter O'Brien	Jazz Piano of a Celtic Soul	2003	
Ronan Guilfoyle's Lingua Franca	Exit	2003	Pmp

Siobhan Pettit	Long Ago Tomorrow	2003	Tfor3 Records
Christine Tobin	Romance and Revolution	2004	Babel
David MacKenzie & Josh Johnston	A Minor Happiness	2004	Shandon Records
Hot Club of Dublin	Gypsy Jazz	2004	
Louis Stewart	Core Business	2004	Villa Records
Maria Tecce	All About Love	2004	
Mike Nielsen	Sound Recipes	2004	Mixen Music
Mouth Organ	Scary Dreams	2004	
Richard Nelson	Moment's Notice	2004	
Tommy Halferty	Breathing the Air	2004	
Trouble Penetrator	A Taste of Trouble Penetrator	2004	
Zrazy	Dream On	2004	Alfi
Café Orchestra	The Kilworth Concert	2005	
Cluskey Hopkins Band	Cluskey Hopkins Band at Stavanger Norway	2005	
Fuzzy Logic Ensemble	New Hat	2005	Fuzzy Logic Ensemble
Grainne Brookfield	Close Your Eyes	2005	
Hilary Bow	Sean Nova	2005	Bow Records
Honor Heffernan	Fire and Ice	2005	Honi Music
Kai Big Band	Projections	2005	
Louis Stewart & Knut Mikalsen	Paradoxal Intervention	2005	Villa Records
Mark O'Leary / Mat Maneri / Matthew Shipp	Chamber Trio	2005	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Mat Maneri / Randy Peterson	Self-Luminous	2005	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Tomasz Stanko / Billy Hart	Levitation	2005	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Uri Caine / Ben Perowsky	Closure	2005	Leo Records
Mike Nielsen / Benjamin Dwyer	Evolution	2005	
Nigel Mooney	All My Love's In Vain	2003/2005	Self Release / Ruby Works
Oleg Ponomarev	Master of Russian Gypsy Violin	2005	Arc music
Organics	New Light	2005	
Patrick Collins and Drazen Derrick	Double Standards	2005	

Sami Moukaddem	The Crest of a Wave	2005	
Tom O'Hare & Gunther Fischer featuring James Williams	Tom O'Hare & Gunther Fischer featuring James Williams	2005	Moodjazz
Arguelles/Guilfoyle/Black	Live in Dublin	2006	Auand
Big Band Byrne	Leaving For Home	2006	TDCB Records
Cormac Kenevey	This is Living	2006	Candid
Cortisol	Miscellaneous Meet	2006	
Maria Tecce	Torch Song	2006	
Mark O'Leary / Cuong Vu / Tom Rainey	Waiting	2006	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Steve Swallow / Pierre Favre	Awakening	2006	Leo Records
Melanie O'Reilly	House of the Dolphins	2006	
Oldsquarelines	Habit of Energy	2006	
Red Rocket	Mitten	2006	
Sami Moukaddem	Resistance: Soul Food	2006	
Susannah De Wrixon	Pick Yourself Up	2006	
David Lyttle	True Story	2007	Lyte Records
Dorothy Murphy	Calling	2007	
Havana Son	Sin fronteras	2007	HavanaSon
Hugh Buckley	Sketches of Now	2007	
Kevin Brady Trio Featuring Bill Carrothers	Common Ground	2007	
Louis Stewart & The Frank Harrison Trio	You've Changed	2007	Desert Island Jazz Productions
Louis Stewart and Peter King	Angel Eyes	2007	Blaurecords
Mark O'Leary	On the Shore	2007	Clean Feed
Mark O'Leary	Signs	2007	FMR Records
Mark O'Leary / Günter Müller	Skyshifter	2007	Creative Sources
Mark O'Leary, Dylan Van Der Schyff, Wayne Horvitz	Flux	2007	FMR Records
Mark O'Leary, Terje Isungset	Shamanic Voices	2007	FMR Records
Orla Murphy	Wishful Thinking	2007	
Phil Ware Trio	In Our Own Time	2007	Pewter Music
Reverse Trust	As If	2007	No Label
Sean Scott Jones	Clear the Room	2007	CDBY
Spike Robinson with the Jim Doherty Trio	I Wish I Knew (Live in Dublin 1979)	2007	Nagel Heyer

Tommy Halferty	Solo	2007	Bottlenote Records
Zoidan Jankalovich	ZoiD Versus the Jazz Musicians of Ireland Vol 1	2007	Diatribes Records
Paul James	From Palette to Piano	2007	<a href="http://DIVAmusic.biz">DIVAmusic.biz</a>
Black Magic Big Band	At Last	2008	
Christine Tobin	Secret Life of a Girl	2008	Babel
Cormac Kenevey	The Art of Dreaming	2008	Candid
David MacKenzie & Josh Johnston	Notes Home	2008	Shandon Records
Francesco Turrisi	Si Dolce è il Tormento	2008	Diatribes Records
Mark O'Leary	Elipses	2008	FMR Records
Mark O'Leary	Fabrikraum	2008	Creative Sources
Mark O'Leary & Han Bennink	Television	2008	Ayler Records
Mark O'Leary / Eyvind Kang / Dylan Van Der Schyff	Zemlya	2008	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Kenny Wollesen / Jamie Saft	The Synth Show	2008	Leo Records
Mark O'Leary / Ståle Storløkken / Stein Inge Braekhus*	St Fin Barre's	2008	Leo Records
Métier	Cascade	2008	IMC
Organics	Liquid Sunshine	2008	
Puck Fair	Forgotten Carnival	2008	Own label
Ray Preston Quartet	Hip! Who? Ray!	2008	
White Rocket	White Rocket	2008	Diatribes Records
Yurodny	Odd Set	2008	Diatribes Records
Ryan Quigley	Laphroaig-ian Slip	2008	
Dave Kane's Rabbit Project	The Eye of the Duck	2009	Edition Records
Fuzzy Logic Ensemble	Mouthpiece	2009	
Hot Club of Dublin	Fin Voyage	2009	
Kevin Brady Trio Featuring Bill Carrothers	Zeitgeist	2009	
Mark McKnight	Overnight	2009	
Mark O'Leary	Atmos	2009	FMR Records
Mark O'Leary & Sunny Murray	Ode to Albert Ayler	2009	Ayler Records
Mark O'Leary, Matthew Shipp	Labyrinth	2009	FMR Records

Simon Jermyn	Trot A Mouse	2009	Fresh Sound New Talent
Togetherness	Togetherness	2009	
Tony Jones	What a Difference	2009	
Alex Matthias Quartet	Goin' Roamin'	2010	
Andreas Varady & David Lyttle	Questions	2010	Lyte Records
Christine Tobin	Tapestry Unravelled	2010	Trail Belle Records
Cortisol / Mark Linnane	Splitzo	2010	
Crossbones	Crossbones	2010	
Isabelle O'Connell	Reservoir	2010	Diatribes Records
Jazz Organism	Live in Dublin	2010	
Josh Johnston	The Shape Of Things	2010	Shandon Records
Maria Tecce	Viva	2010	
Mark O'Leary	4 Urban Landscapes	2010	Creative Sources
Mark O'Leary	Live in Istanbul	2010	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary - Şenol Küçükaydım - Murat Çopur - Can Ömer Uygan	Snow	2010	TIBProd. Italy
Michael Nielsen	Acoustic Sound Recipes	2010	Lyte Records
Mick Coady's Synergy featuring David Binney	Nine Tales of the Pendulum	2010	
MSG	Tasty!	2010	Plus Loin Records
Philip Mc Dermot	Now	2010	Phil Mc Dermot Records
Simon Jermyn	Hymni	2010	Diatribes Records
Yurodny	Evenset	2010	Diatribes Records
Boylan/Buckley/Evans Trio	These are Soulful Days	2011	
Boylan/Rooney Quartet	Something We All Know	2011	
Colette Henry	You Stole my Heart	2011	
David Redmond	Roots	2011	
Francesco Turrisi	Fotografia	2011	Diatribes Records
Gay McIntyre	The Music Within Me	2011	Lyte Records
John Leighton	Dramatic Life	2011	Lyte Records
Linley Hamilton	Taylor Made	2011	Lyte Records
Mark McKnight	Do or Die	2011	
Mark O'Leary	Astral Fishing	2011	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary	Project Apollo	2011	TIBProd. Italy

Mark O'Leary / Peter Friis-Nielsen* / Stefan Pasborg	Støj	2011	Ayler Records
Mark O'Leary* - Gauthier* - Cline*	Waves III	2011	TIBProd. Italy
Ogham	Dalkey Song	2011	
Paul Dunlea	Bi-polAr	2011	
ReDiviDeR	Never Odd or Even	2011	Diatribе Records
Six of the Best	Six of the Best	2011	Marnell Music
Tarab	Tarab	2011	Taquin Records
Christine Tobin	Sailing to Byzantium	2012	Trail Belle Records
Emilie Conway	The Secret of a Rose	2012	
Greg Lloyd Group	Long Way Home	2012	
Hot House Big Band	Wind Machine	2012	
Kevin Lawlor	Exodus	2012	
Leafzang	Leafzang	2012	n/a
Mark O'Leary & Erdem Helvacıoglu*	Istanbul	2012	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary & Jeff Herr & Søren Kjærgaard	Antartica	2012	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary & Olavi Louhivuori & Teppa Hauta-aho	Astral Fishing Extended Edition	2012	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary, Daniele Santini	Norge - Italia	2012	TIBProd. Italy
Ronan Guilfoyle	Renaissance Man	2012	Steeplechase
Sam Jackson	Sharp and Flat	2012	
Orla Murphy	Wonderous Visions	2012	
Seán Mac Erlaine	Long After The Music Is Gone	2012	Ergodos
Austin Durack	Drops of Jazz	2012	AMD
Dig a Little Deeper	Songs from the Small Hours	2012	
Ursula Connolly	Devil May Care	2012	
Aoife Doyle	This Time the Dream's On Me	2013	
Daniel Rorke	The Brave Ones Have All Left Us	2013	
Francesco Turrisi	Grigio	2013	Diatribе Records
Francesco Turrisi	Songs of Experience	2013	Taquin Records
Hugh Buckley/Nigel Clark	The Day of the Duo	2013	
John Moriarty	Echoes	2013	Lyte Records

Julien Colarossi Quartet	Note to Self	2013	
Lauren Kinsella's Thought-Fox	My Guess	2013	Diatribе Records
Louis Stewart & Jim Doherty	Tunes	2013	Beechpark Records
Mark O'Leary	Remixes	2013	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary	Urban Nature	2013	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary, Domenico Sciajno	Seascapes, Vol. 1	2013	TIBProd. Italy
Nigel Mooney	The Bohemian Mooney	2013	Lyte Records
PHISQA	PHISQA	2013	
ReDiviDeR	Meets I Dig Monk, Tuned	2013	Diatribе Records
Rock Fox	The Last Sessions	2013	Beechpark Records
Stephen Davis	Being Human	2013	Babel
Sweeney's Jazzmen	Sweeney's Jazzmen	2013	
The Trio -Jonas Johansen/Lars Møller/Ronan Guilfoyle	Divisions	2013	Calibrated/VME
Tommy Halferty Trio	Blue Impressions	2013	Empreinte
Louise Phelan	Songs from a Darkened Room	2013	
Melanie O'Reilly	Ceol Ceantair/District Music	2013	
Anthony Marsden	Anthony Marsden	2014	
Christine Tobin	A Thousand Kisses Deep	2014	Trail Belle Records
Kavorka	Culture Shock	2014	
Linley Hamilton	In Transition	2014	Lyte Records
Mark O'Leary	Markets	2014	TIBProd. Italy
Mark O'Leary	Seascape Murals	2014	TIBProd. Italy
OKO	I Love You Computer Mountain	2014	Diatribе Records
Rhythm Method	By the Bye	2014	
Stella Bass	Too Darn Hot	2014	
Stephen McHale	Weird Glitches	2014	
Sue Rynhart	Crossings	2014	
Seán Mac Erlaine	A Slender Song	2014	Ergodos
Paul James	Artist at the Piano	2014	PaulJamesArt
Nicola McGuire	But For Now	2014	
CEO Experiment	CEO Experiment	2015	



Cormac McCarthy	Cottage Evolution	2015	Lyte Records
Hugh Buckley / Nigel Clark	The Day of the Duo	2015	
Kevin Lawlor	Eight	2015	
Ronan Guilfoyle	Hands	2015	Portmanteau Records
Scott Flanigan	Point of Departure	2015	
Susannah De Wrixon	Sky Lark	2015	
The Owl Ones	Shadow Loves the Sun	2015	
Tommy Halferty Trio	Burkina	2015	
Trot A Mouse	Pictorial Atlas of Mammals	2015	Skirl Records
Zrazy	The Art of Happy Accidents	2015	Alfi
ON/OFF: Mark Flynn & Peter Moc	Extra Mile	2015	
Emilie Conway	Dear World	2016	
Honor Heffernan & Hugh Buckley	Two Heads are Better Than One	2016	
Julien & John	Street Life	2016	
Kevin Brady	Ensam	2016	
Snowpoet	Snowpoet	2016	
Truly DiVine & Josh Johnston	Close Your Eyes	2016	Shandon Records
Umbra	Umbra	2016	
Yurodny	Haivka	2016	Diatribes Records
Insufficient Funs	Insufficient Funs	2016	
Paul O'Donnell	Light and Shade	2016	
Ensemble Ériu	Imbas	2016	Ensemble Records / Raelach Records
Filipa Quintino	With the Flow	2016	
Izumi Kimura & Tommy Halferty	Maelstrom	2016	

## Appendix B - Tables of Dublin Venues

Table 2: South City Centre Venues Associated with Jazz (Dublin 2)

Alliance Francaise	Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Anseo	Camden Street Lower, Dublin 2
Arthur's	Thomas Street, Dublin 2
Bewley's Café Theatre	Grafton Street, Dublin 2
Bord Gáis Theatre	Grand Canal Square, Dublin 2
Brasserie Le Pont	Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2
Café En Seine	Dawson Street, Dublin 2
Central Hotel	Exchequer Street, Dublin 2
Diep Le Shaker	Pembroke Lane, Dublin 2
Eden Bar & Grill	South William Street, Dublin 2
Goethe Institut	Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2
House	Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2
Jazz Café	Asdil's Row, Temple Bar, Dublin 2
JJ Smyth's	Aungier Street, Dublin 2
KC Peaches Wine Cave	Nassau Street, Dublin 2
La Dolce Vita	Music Hall/Cow's Lane, Temple Bar, Dublin 2
National Concert Hall	Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2
Odeon	Harcourt Street, Dublin 2
Olympia Theatre	Dame Street, Dublin 2
Residence	St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2
Shelbourne Hotel	St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2

Sweeny's Bar (formally Le Cirk)	Dame Street, Dublin 2
The Back Loft	Augustine Street, Dublin 2
The Button Factory	Curved Street, Dublin 2
The Centre for Creative Practices	Pembroke Street Lower, Dublin 2
The Ferocious Mingle Market (Closed December 2014)	Thomas Street, Dublin 2
The International Bar	Wicklow Street, Dublin 2
The Leeson Lounge	Leeson Street, Dublin 2
The Mercantile Hotel	Dame Street, Dublin 2
The Mezz	Eustace Street, Dublin 2
The Mint Bar	Westmoreland Street, Dublin 2
The Project Arts Centre	East Essex St, Dublin 2
The Sugar Club	Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2
The Workman's Club	Wellington Quay, Dublin 2
Unitarian Church	St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2
Vicar Street	Thomas Street, Dublin 2
Whelan's	Wexford Street, Dublin 2

Table 3: Other South City Centre Venues

Hampton Hotel	Morehampton Road, Dublin 4
Searsons	Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4
Ranelagh Arts Centre	Ranelagh, Dublin 6
Wild Goose	Sandford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
Christ Church	Christchurch Place, Dublin 8

The Bello Bar	Portobello Harbour, Dublin 8
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Table 4: North City Centre Venues

Cobalt Café	North Great George's Street, Dublin 1
Foam Café & Gallery	Strand Street Great, Dublin 1
Hugh Lane Gallery	Parnell Square North, Dublin 1
The Gibson Hotel	Point Village, Dublin 1
The Grand Social	Lower Liffey Street, Dublin 1
The Twisted Pepper	Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1
Yamamori	Ormond Quay, Dublin 1
BLOCKT	Smithfield, Dublin 7
Cobblestone	King Street North, Dublin 7
Listen at Lilliput	Sitric Road, Dublin 7
The Joinery	Rosemount Terrace, Dublin 7
Cibo's (Closed)	East Pier, Howth, Dublin 13
The House	Main Street, Howth, Dublin 13

Table 5: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown/Co. Wicklow Venues

Fitzpatrick Hotel	Killiney, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Gables Restaurant	Torquay Road, Foxrock, Dublin 18
Newpark Music Centre	Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock
Pavillion Theatre	Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire
Seaport Restaurant	Monkstown, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

The National Yacht Club	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
The Purty Loft	Old Dunleary Rd, Monkstown
Walter's Bar	Upper Georges Street, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Harbour Bar	Strand Rd, Bray, Co. Wicklow